

# PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FEBRUARY 2022





## INTRODUCTION

PAGE 04

## PART A: WHAT MAKES PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE SPECIAL

PAGE 07

## PART B: THE CHARACTER OF PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE

PAGE 22

## PART C: MANAGING CHANGE IN PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE

PAGE 64

## PART D: FURTHER INFORMATION AND APPENDICES

PAGE 89



For ease of use this document has been produced to be read on-screen. It contains a series of features that make it easier to use and navigate between the sections.

## CONTENTS

The contents page allows users to navigate directly to the required section by clicking on the section heading. The first page of each section also has an individual contents page for navigation within that section.



## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

This section traces the development of Plymouth's city centre – its origins in the 19th century expansion of the old town to meet its neighbours – and its reconstruction following the devastation of the Blitz. The ad-hoc positioning of the old town's markets and commercial activity at its western peripheries became the cradle for one of the largest experiments in 20th century planning in

## NAVIGATION

The buttons along the bottom of each page allow you to jump to a specific section. Once you've clicked on a section, it will turn bold so you know which section you are in.



You can also use the buttons in the top right hand corner to jump to the contents, appendices, further information, or back to the page you were previously on.



Within the the document you will see a 'Quick Facts' box, these are all the key point to each section. Click on the Icon to go to the next section



## Plans

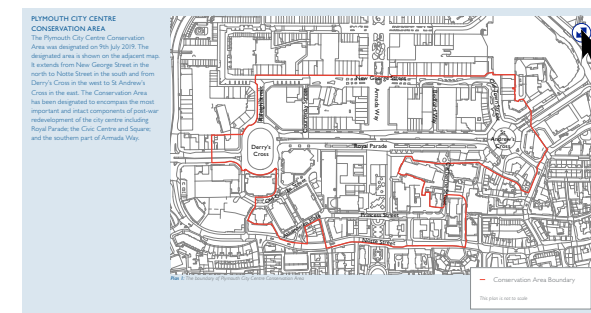


When you see this icon, click to see a larger version of the plan.



Click on this icon and it will take you back to the original plan.

INTRODUCTION





## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA?

A conservation area is an “area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”.<sup>01</sup> It is a statutory designation and must be considered when seeking change or new development. Designation recognises the unique quality of the heritage of that area as a whole. This quality comes not only from individual buildings but also other features, including (but not limited to) topography, materials, thoroughfares, street furniture, open spaces and landscaping. These all contribute to the character and appearance of an area, resulting in a distinctive local identity and sense of place.

## WHAT DOES DESIGNATION MEAN?

Conservation area designation aims to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of an area which is of special architectural or historic interest. Therefore, in a Conservation Area, changes to the external appearance of buildings may require planning permission from the Council which would not otherwise be needed. For example, changes to external cladding and installing commercial signage will require planning permission. Under the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) Conservation Areas are designated heritage assets and their conservation is to be given great weight in planning permission decisions.

## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN?

Understanding the character and significance of conservation areas is essential for managing change within them. Councils are therefore required to “formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement”<sup>02</sup> of conservation areas within their jurisdiction. These proposals are normally presented in the form of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAAMP), which defines and records the special interest of a conservation area, (see **Part A**), analyses the characteristics that make it special (see **Part B**), as well as setting out a plan for managing change to ensure its on-going protection and enhancement (see **Part C**).

This CAAMP has been prepared in line with current best practice guidance published by Historic England, the public body who manage the care and protection of the historic environment. Specifically Historic England Advice Note 1 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management has been utilised. It has also been produced in alignment with local planning policy namely the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034* and its accompanying Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

## QUICK FACTS

- Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area was designated in 2019 and is the country's first to designate Post-War heritage.
- A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.
- There are additional planning controls in conservation areas to manage change to the heritage.
- Designation means that the Council must make plans to look after the heritage of the area.
- The CAAMP provides specific evidence base and management proposals in relation to the Conservation Area, supporting the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034* and its accompanying Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- The community were involved in the development of these plans through the consultation process. for more details see page 05



01 Section 69 (1), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*

02 Section 71 (2), *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*





## WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THIS DOCUMENT?

This CAAMP is a vehicle for understanding the significance of an area and managing change within it and its setting. It provides guidance on reinforcing the positive character of the historic area as well as for avoiding, minimising and mitigating negative impacts identified as affecting the area. In this respect, it is both an evidence base and the Council's management tool for the preservation and enhancement of the conservation area. As such, the CAAMP will be a material consideration in the process of determining planning applications as well as providing important evidence for the future development of planning policy relating to the city centre.

The CAAMP is one of the ways that the Council is implementing Policy SPT11 of the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034* in respect of the City Centre Conservation Area. This policy states that the local planning authorities of Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon will pursue a proactive and solution-orientated approach for the conservation and, where appropriate, enhancement of the historic environment. However, the CAAMP is not itself a planning policy document, nor does it replace the JLP's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which amplifies how the policies of the JLP will be implemented. What it is able to do is to provide further specific amplification of how the JLP and the SPD will be implemented in respect of the City Centre Conservation Area.

The CAAMP also provides valuable historic environment context and management proposals that the Council, and others, will need to consider in the undertaking of activities such as public realm design, highways management and transport projects. It does not in itself commit the Council or others to any particular level of investment, or usurp other policies and key drivers (for example, the climate emergency), but it does ensure that the historic environment has proper recognition as a factor of substantial weight in decisions regarding management and change in the city centre.

## CONSULTATION PROCESS

The council consulted on this document under the requirements of part II of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. The consultation ran for six weeks during September, October and November 2021. It was widely publicised on the council's social media platforms and leaflets and posters were distributed in the area. The council received 36 formal comments via the Plymouth City Council website and a further ten emails directly from consultees and responders. A focus group was held at the Council House on Armada Way with stakeholders invited to look at the document more in-depth with a facilitator. A lunch time session was held online presented by the 20th Century Society with over 40 people in virtual attendance. Once the consultation had ended the comments were collated and analysed in detail with amendments of document agreed with Purcell and Plymouth City Council. This final version of the document was put forward for adoption by full cabinet in spring 2022. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond during the consultation



## WE WOULD LOVE YOUR VIEWS ON PLYMOUTH'S NEWEST CONSERVATION AREA

Visit our website to see the new management plan for the city centre and let us know your thoughts from 30 September to 11 November 2021 at: [www.plymouth.gov.uk/caamp](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/caamp)



HM Government

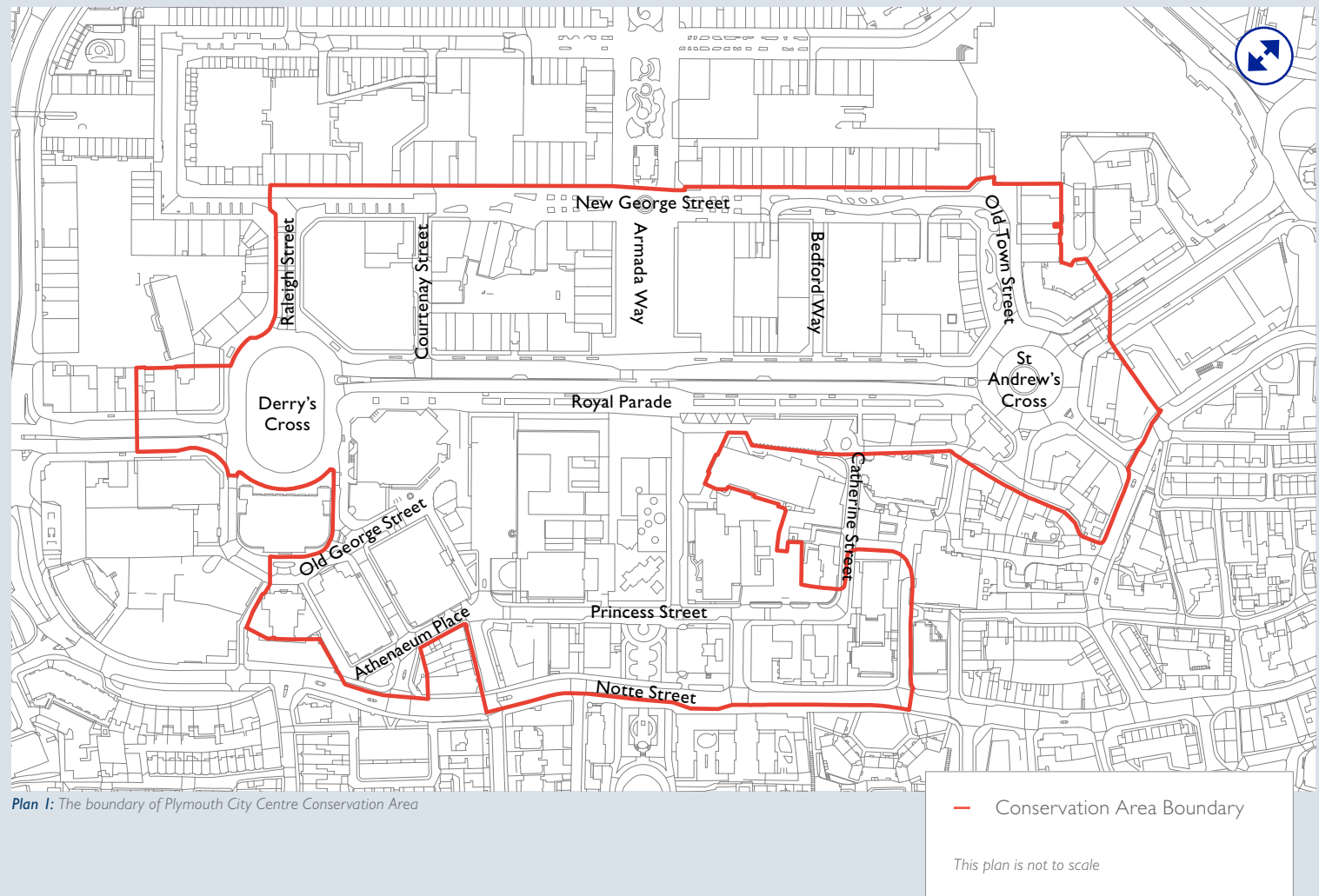


Historic England



## PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

The Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area was designated on 9 July 2019. The designated area is shown on the adjacent map. It extends from New George Street in the north to Notte Street in the south and from Derry's Cross in the west to St Andrew's Cross in the east. The Conservation Area has been designated to encompass the most important and intact components of Post-War redevelopment of the city centre including Royal Parade; the Civic Centre and Square; and the southern part of Armada Way.





# PART A: WHAT MAKES PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE SPECIAL?

This part of the CAAMP provides a summary of the post-war redevelopment of Plymouth City Centre and places this within the national and international context of the reconstruction of other towns in this period. It concludes with a description of what is special about the Conservation Area in terms of its development, appearance, character and setting.

1.0 Development of Plymouth City Centre	08
2.0 Plymouth in Context	18
3.0 Summary of Special Interest	20







# I.0: DEVELOPMENT OF PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE

## I.1 INTRODUCTION

This section traces the development of Plymouth's city centre from its origins in the 19th century expansion of the old town to meet its neighbours, to its reconstruction following the devastation of the Blitz. The ad-hoc positioning of the old town's markets and commercial activity at its western peripheries became the cradle for one of the largest experiments in 20th century planning in Britain and is today perhaps the most comprehensive survival of what the architectural historian Jeremy Gould has called the last stage *"in a long tradition of humanistic city planning"*.<sup>01</sup>

## I.2 PRE-WAR DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY

Plymouth's growth outwards from the harbour at Sutton Pool, up to and including its incorporation as the City of Plymouth in 1914 from the 'three towns' of Plymouth (formally known as Sutton), Stonehouse and Devonport, resulted in the gradual but comprehensive claiming of the land in between. Sutton, on the east of the city is best known now as the historic Barbican area, while Stonehouse to the west is characterised by its historic naval and military housing and installations. Devonport to the north-west also remains an important naval site. The three 'old towns' once separated by water, tidal incursions, marsh and ditches, are now undivided as the city's growth has filled the spaces between.

The area to the north and west of St Andrew's, the historic church at the western edge of Sutton, increasingly became the focus of the town's commercial and civic activity as it grew beyond the old town wall and gates, away from the waterfront. Service industries made use of the space available close to the main roads to Tavistock, Devonport and Saltash, and planned development schemes followed. From the 17th to the 19th century, the area was a focus for Plymouth's markets around both the church and Guildhall.

Ambitious development during the 18th century gave Plymouth a touch of the Regency grandeur that had remodelled so many city centres. John Foulston's east-west Union Street brought the three towns together and at its west end Foulston's designs for the newly laid out George Street (now Old George Street) gave the city a neo-Grecian civic centre for the times: the original Athenaeum and Theatre Royal and St Catherine's Church, and Princess Square and the Crescent added urban gentile formality. The new commercial thoroughfare of Bedford Street stretching from St Andrew's Cross to Frankfort Gate replaced the Pigmarket and was the backdrop for the later civic and commercial neo-Gothic developments that modernised and formalised the city centre between St Andrew's Cross and Union Street. A new Guildhall was built in 1874, standing to the south of a rectangular square, St Andrew's Church to the east and new civic buildings to the north.

Many of the developments of the 19th century endured for the first half of the 20th century, although new format of cinema made its mark: not least the Royal Cinema (today the Reel Cinema) which replaced Foulston's Theatre Royal in 1937, and Princess Square which became a car park, responding to a need in the city which was fast becoming one of the most congested in south-west England.



Bedford Street, between the wars: the busy street replaced the old pigmarket and was the centre of commercial activity in Plymouth. (Ref: 616/108 The Box, Plymouth)

## QUICK FACTS

- Plymouth's growth outwards from the harbour at Sutton Pool with the area around St Andrew's Church becoming the focus of commercial and civic activity.
- As a naval city, Plymouth was a significant target of bombing raids during World War II which saw much of the city centre destroyed in 1941.
- Prominent town planner, Patrick Abercrombie and city engineer James Paton Watson published their redevelopment plan, A Plan for Plymouth, in 1943.
- The original plan, published in 1943, was larger and more comprehensive than the plan as it was built. It included public baths at North Cross, a stadium, and a brand new Guildhall, replacing the bombed shell that survived the war.
- The backbone of the new city centre was formed by Armada Way, a grand boulevard stretching from the station to the war memorial on the Hoe. Royal Parade formed the other axis.
- Realisation of the Plan began in 1947 with the first buildings completed along Royal Parade in 1949 to 1950 and culminating with the opening of the Civic Centre in 1962.
- Individual architects had freedom in their designs, but stuck to a palette of Portland stone, bronze shop fronts, and canopies. This was relaxed during the later stages of the plan leading to a wider palette of materials.
- Although there has been change to buildings and some loss, the plan is still clearly evident and still represents the best of the humanistic planning of the Post-War reconstruction.
- Evolution of the city centre continues with strategies to revitalise the city centre integral to the JLP.



<sup>01</sup> Jeremy Gould. 2010. *Plymouth: Vision of a modern city*. English Heritage. P63



### I.3 FROM BLITZ TO 'RESURGAM'

As a naval city, Plymouth was a significant target for Luftwaffe raids during World War II. The fires caused by incendiary attacks devastated the city centre. In the sustained attacks of March and April 1941 200,000 incendiary bombs fell on Plymouth, along with 6,600 high explosive bombs. On the night of 21 March 1941 alone, the bombs killed 293 people and destroyed 750 dwellings. An incendiary bomb on the Bedford Street draper's store, John Yeo, spread to the Dingles department store and despite the sustained efforts of firefighters from across the south-west, the end of the attack signalled the end of much of the city centre. The market survived, along with other pre-war buildings including Alfred Waterhouse's terracotta Prudential building, but acres of the city centre had been destroyed or damaged beyond repair. Commercial activity was squashed into Nissen huts and the existing market.



Bombs that fell on Plymouth during the Blitz were recorded in the 'Bomb Book'. This image shows where bombs fell over the night of the 21 to 22 March 1941. (Ref: 1555/33 21-22 Mar 1941 The Box, Plymouth)





Both St Andrew's Church and Charles Church stood roofless and gutted though the stone walls of both survived, alongside the Plymouth limestone walls of the Guildhall. As soon as the fires were put out at St Andrew's, a local headmistress fixed a wooden sign to the church's porch. On it, she had written 'Resurgam' (I shall rise again). The motto was taken up across Europe and stood for the future reconstruction that was being talked of even before the bombing had stopped. Lord Reith, Minister for Works and Building, had, in February 1941, secured the Government's commitment to a national planning policy, one that would overcome the obstacles of land ownership and values, municipal boundaries, and local financial shortfalls. The reconstruction would be a national affair, and Reith exhorted councils to "plan boldly"<sup>02</sup> for the peace.



The temporary Nissen hut shops are demolished as Royal Parade takes shape. (Ref: 1418114094 © Mirrorpix, The Box, Plymouth)



Abercrombie and Paton Watson's Plan for Plymouth, 1943 (Ref: The Box, Plymouth)

Plymouth's wartime mayor, and former MP (for Sutton), Waldorf Astor and his wife Nancy, who had held the same Sutton seat since Waldorf resigned it in 1919, were active in promoting a radical approach to rebuilding the city. Lord Astor had been acquainted with Patrick Abercrombie, Britain's foremost planning expert, for many years, so that when Plymouth's emergency planning committee issued its invitation to secure Abercrombie as a consultant in September 1941, his acceptance had already been assured.

Abercrombie arrived for a weekend visit in October 1941. Lord Astor later recalled that: "I well recollect how my wife took him [Abercrombie] for a walk ... They had the vision of a view ... which for generations had been blotted out by promiscuous buildings. That is how we got the conception of a broad open way from the high ground at North Road station down through the heart of Plymouth and up to the old Eddystone Lighthouse, which has been re-erected as a monument on the Hoe".<sup>03</sup> The 'vision' would become the north-south axial boulevard, Armada Way, around which the whole plan would evolve.

Abercrombie and city engineer James Paton Watson produced a number of different plans before the publication in 1943 of A Plan for Plymouth. In that volume, beautifully produced, although limited in print run due to a paper shortage, the principles and preliminary design for the new city were set out. New suburbs, neighbourhood units, orbited around the city centre, linking through wide highways to the A38 parkway. This ethos of town-planning zoned the different uses and needs of the city: there would be commercial zones; municipal zones; and leisure zones, but housing would be moved away from the city centre to the new suburbs. It was formally adopted by the Council in 1944 and a Reconstruction Committee appointed to enact it.

<sup>02</sup> Stephen Essex and Mark Brayshay. 2008. *Boldness diminished? The Post-War battle to replan a bomb-damaged provincial city.* *Urban History*, Vol. 35, No.3.

<sup>03</sup> Peter Hall. 2014. *Cities of Tomorrow: An intellectual history of urban planning and design since 1880.* John Wiley and Sons. P257



## 1.4 CONSTRUCTION BEGINS: 1947 TO 1951

When the plans for reconstruction came to be realised, the Plan was not quite as bold as Abercrombie and Paton Watson had initially envisioned. Support for the Plan had not been universal and financial and ownership constraints remained. However, Abercrombie returned in 1947 as a consultant on the development of the Plan and George VI opened the first section of Royal Parade that year. At the same time, compulsory purchases cleared the way for construction to begin in earnest on nearly 175 acres of the city centre: the Beaux Art city with its wide boulevards that emerged from the rubble would still be bold.

The visionary Armada Way (formerly called Phoenix Way) formed the backbone of the Plan: a wide boulevard that stretched from the station in the north (though the grand station terminus was never fully realised), to the Hoe Park. The new thoroughfare of Royal Parade took the place of Bedford Street, stretching from St Andrew's Cross in the east to Derry's Cross to the west. New dual carriageways flanked the development, giving access to the new grand roundabouts.

Larger commercial enterprises successfully lobbied for the prime positions, perhaps best exemplified by the first building to take root: the department store, Dingles (1949 to 1952), on the north side of the Royal Parade and Armada Way junction, and the Pearl Assurance building opposite (1950 to 1952). Dingles was designed by the veteran modernist architect Thomas Tait, who was also a consultant on the wider Plan. Although the symmetry of the 1943 Plan was dispensed with, the two buildings set the tone for the style and size of the flagship Royal Parade buildings. Monumental, steel-framed, classically-styled and faced in Portland Stone, each

had finely proportioned metal upper windows with opulent bronze framed windows below. Canopies perforated by circular glass lights and extendable canvas blinds protected those beneath from the elements. Abercrombie and Paton Watson's Plan for the monumentality of the vision, enabled by the wide roads was realised and augmented by the squat towers on each of the two buildings and repeated elsewhere, the height and scale of which were carefully controlled across the scheme.

At Derry's Cross, the Cooperative's in-house architect struck a slightly less formal tone. The building (1950 to 1952) took the whole block between: Royal Parade; Raleigh Street; Courtenay Street; and New George Street. Glass blocks around windows gave it a light feel, augmented by its balcony above, complete with bright yellow soffit.



Dingles department store under construction, 1950. Derry's clocktower and the former National and Provincial Bank (now the Bank public house). The temporary Nissen hut shop fronts can be seen in the middle ground. (Ref: 616/108 The Box, Plymouth)



The steel frame in place for construction of Dingles, 1950 (Ref: 1418/06138 © Mirrorpix, The Box, Plymouth)



Aerial shot of Royal Parade, c.1950 with New George Street under construction. The steel frame of Dingles is in place. The old market is still standing. (Ref: 3488/7065 The Box, Plymouth)





Armada Way, 1961, from the top of the Civic Centre, showing the central lawns before pedestrianisation. (Ref: 3488/19 The Box, Plymouth)



Dingles canopy over Armada Way, 1960s. (Ref: 3488/5605 The Box, Plymouth)



The film star, Richard Todd, salutes the crowd as he arrives for the opening of the Drake Cinema, Derry's Cross. The Cooperative building can be seen behind, 1958. (Ref: 1418/14915 The Box, Plymouth)





### 1.5 THE NEXT PHASE: 1951 TO 1961

From 1951, more diversion from the palette occurred, city architect Hector Stirling opened the way for other materials to be used. The palette had already been opened up to red brick due to the survival of the relatively new neo-Georgian Western Morning News building (1937 to 1939) on New George Street and its incorporation into the Plan. On the return to New George Street of Dingles, Dolcis shoe shop (1949 to 1951) used the same rectangular windows, framed in Portland stone, of the Tait monolith, but with a distinct red brick face.



Shoppers congregate at the junction of New George Street and Armada Way, 1957. (Ref: 3488/431 The Box, Plymouth)

At the other end of Royal Parade, the anchor sites of St Andrew's Cross roundabout met the constraints of palette and style, while maintaining striking individuality. While the stoic classicism of the Royal Building (1947 to 1953) in the south-west corner, with no ground floor shops, created a formal Portland stone gateway to the old town, the austere Devon granite of the National Provincial Bank's (1955 to 1958) treble-height portico was illuminated by the blue mosaic tiles within, with golden motifs picked out. The blue clocktower, rising above Royal Parade, exemplified its classic-to-modern aspect. The concave Post Office (1954 to 1958) building across the road from it, at the junction with Old Town Street, reflected the curve of the roundabout, and was faced in slate recessed into a Portland stone frame. At ground floor level, it was supported by black terrazzo (now brown glazed tile) pilotis.

Old Town Street diverted from the plan due to a requirement that it accommodate a pre-war telephone exchange, which survives, tucked behind the old Post Office building. The gentle rerouting affected the symmetry of the original plan, as did the decision to retain the imposing Methodist building in Cornwall Street. The buildings of Old Town Street and New George Street ranges were less imposing than the corner blocks and fronts to Royal Parade, but their well-designed façades brought only slightly less grandeur to the street scene. Most were topped by terraced attic storeys, some enclosed, others open, all speaking to the scale and vision of the Plan. To the west of New George Street, less imposing buildings allowed space for the smaller shops. It was here that the Pannier Market was rebuilt (1956 to 1959), a vast concrete hall with rhythmic canopies above, embracing the Festival of Britain style.



Exeter Viaduct and National Provincial Bank under construction. The newly completed concave Post Office building, centre left. (Ref: 3488/229 The Box, Plymouth)



The Royal Parade from the Gas Board building, 1958. (Ref: 3488/5605 The Box, Plymouth)





## 1.6 THE RELIGIOUS AND ENTERTAINMENT PRECINCTS

Royal Parade, always more than a simple road, offered space enough to step back and admire the monumental front row of the new commercial and retail district, shaded by lime trees along the south side. Although the central garden of Royal Parade, as detailed in the 1943 Plan, was cut for costs, early landscaping had a planted central reservation before the present railings were erected. Bus stops along the avenue brought the people in to the city from the outlying suburbs: arrival set the visitor right into the heart of the new city.

South of Royal Parade lay the historic civic areas of town, but also its main church, St Andrew's, restored in a medieval style, and its historic synagogue. Abercrombie and Paton Watson planned to retain the historic mainstays of Plymouth's faith communities and augment them. In the new religious precinct, French architect Louis de Soissons designed the Unitarian (1955 to 1958) and Baptist (1956 to 1959) churches. Referencing Plymouth's historic importance as a city that sent settlers across the Atlantic, these churches used New England motifs, shallow pitched roofs, copper spires on bright white belvederes. Their slim Gothic windows spoke to those in the older buildings close by: the synagogue; dispensary; and Prestyn house, and the relative quiet of the area centred on Catherine Street added to the contemplative atmosphere.

To the south-west of Royal Parade, an entertainment precinct reimagined Foulston's Athenaeum (1958 to 1961). An auditorium was augmented by a seating area enclosed within a steel frame, fully glazed, standing on blue mosaic tiled pilotis. Beside it, the pre-war Royal Cinema was retained, its Portland stone façade an anticipation of the strongest element of the new city's palette. The Drake Cinema on Derry's Cross projected a large model of

the Golden Hind into the streetscape. A theatre was originally intended for the entertainment precinct but did not arrive until 1982. The new Theatre Royal (1979 to 1982 by Peter Moro Partnership) finally opened on land undeveloped since the war. While it did not use the Portland stone of the older buildings, its smart glazing and bronzework spoke to the heyday of the department stores across Royal Parade.



Aerial view of Derry's Cross, 1996, before the construction of the Travelodge on the car park site in front of the Athenaeum. (Ref: 3488/166 The Box, Plymouth)





Between the religious and entertainment precincts, office buildings provided space for the work of the city to be done. Purpose-built modern blocks such as Princess Court (opened 1962), provided much needed purpose-designed light and airy office accommodation and reflected an international style. The diversion from the classical palette included cast concrete aggregate. The law courts (1960 to 1963, now Plymouth Combined Court) also used, by economic necessity, more economic materials, though decorative elements and fenestration firmly placed it within the Great Square (now the Civic Square).

## 1.7 THE GREAT SQUARE AND CIVIC CENTRE

It had been determined to save the Guildhall, and its interior was richly rebuilt. The Great Square, the civic space that would come to characterise the southern stretch of Armada Way, retained trees from the old gardens (and cemetery) on to which it was overlaid, giving it some immediate maturity. Paving and planting was augmented by seating, and a large reflecting pool that was almost immediately adopted by model yacht enthusiasts. The concert hall that was also to grace the space gave way to law courts, but the Civic Centre that was to define it was opened in 1962. Designed by Stirling and brought to life by Jellicoe, Ballantyne and Coleridge,

the tower block was put in conversation with the Guildhall's own tower. It was an unapologetic modernist moment in the Beaux-Arts plan, clad in glass and Devon granite aggregate panels with Delabole slate facings at the base. Red Murano glass mosaic-faced pilotis support the bridge and the Council House's Portland stone-detailed chamber. The interiors were sumptuously detailed with marble, mosaic, murals and tapestries. The Civic Centre's butterfly roof would become its defining characteristic, elevated high above the planned city. Its roof terrace and restaurant could be enjoyed by the public.



View south from the Civic Centre to the Hoe, 1970. Princess Court to the lower right; Barclays to the lower left, the NAAFI building (built 1949 to 1951; demolished 2010) opposite. (Ref: 3488/37 The Box, Plymouth)



The Civic Centre under construction, 1961. (Ref: 3488/10828 The Box, Plymouth)



The Civic Centre and Great Square, c. 1965. (Ref: 3488/69 The Box, Plymouth)





## 1.8 THE END OF THE PLAN

The plan was effectively complete with the opening of the Civic Centre in 1962. Fashions, and social and economic conditions move fast, however, the city centre's fate has been better than many of Britain's Post-War set pieces. Much of the city centre remains intact, and despite its relatively short heyday, the Civic Centre has weathered the calls for its demolition (aided by its listing in 2007, when it finally closed). A number of other buildings have also been recognised through listing and increasing interest and support for Post-War architecture has seen a renewed interest in Plymouth's future. Nevertheless, the later-20th and early 21st centuries have not been without loss. The Drake's Circus shopping centre, opened in 1971, was demolished to make way for the new mall (opened in 2006). With it went a corner of the Beaux-Arts plan. At Derry's Cross, construction of new development has somewhat isolated the Athenaeum and Royal Cinema. The NAAFI, at the junction of Armada Way and Notte Street, was demolished in 2010.

Phased landscaping and public realm projects undertaken across the city centre have overlain different designs and materials, many of them informal, reflecting their origin moments rather than their setting within the city and led to an overloaded streetscape which, while it can sometimes lack unity, has provided welcome seating opportunities and attractive planting schemes that are well-used and enjoyed by Plymothians and demonstrate the value of the city centre's bountiful amenity space.

Interiors have in many buildings been vastly altered, in others concealed. A plethora of shop signage and branding has limited any street level understanding of once exceptional shop frontages. Economic and social change has also led to significant vacancies, with the physicality of empty shops contributing to an unease about the city's future. However, the amenity areas throughout

the city centre remain well-used by: school-age young people; shoppers of all ages; skaters; model-yachters; walkers; and workers. The city centre still represents, and contains in its fabric, the best of the humanistic planning of the Post-War reconstruction, and Plymouth's continued flagship status as its herald and champion.



A John Hinde postcard view of the Civic Centre, from the terrace of the Cooperative building. (Ref: 3488/8058 The Box, Plymouth)



### 1.9 PLANNING CONTINUES...

The turn of the millennium heralded a new centrality for the city centre however, as planners looked to enhance and build on the Plan for Plymouth, incorporating it in visions for the city's future. In 2003, architecture firm MBM, perhaps best known for their work on the Barcelona Olympics, were invited to prepare a 'Vision for Plymouth' (MBM Arquitectes with AZ Urban Studio). Known as the 'Mackay Vision' after one of the firm's senior partners, and the leaser on the project, David Mackay, the document proposed to build a development strategy to promote a joined-up approach to the city's future. The Vision recognised the importance of the Plan for Plymouth and identified a lack of connectivity in the city and the too-strong a hold of traffic infrastructure. At the same time, MBM envisioned Plymouth as a mini-Manhattan: Abercrombie and Paton Watson's plan had, after all, advocated for a wider range of heights for the city centre. In addition to these problems and opportunities, the notion of 'downtown' was posited, Petula Clark's 1960s hit was referenced, as a challenge: the streets of the city centre so busy during shopping hours were silent and empty outside those times. Broadening the kinds of activity in the city could bring it to life, maximising land-use by inviting residential and more business opportunity, not only offices, but restaurants, bars and cafés.

The Vision called for:

- A released city centre: with more integrated pedestrian areas, freeing it from its 'triangular traffic collar'.
- A connected city centre: where rundown or vacant plots on the periphery of the centre were developed, opening new lines in and out. Movement across the city would be improved with shared pedestrian and vehicular access and Armada Way would be restored through a more open landscaping plan.
- A diversified city centre: taller buildings in set areas would offer new life to the streets through further commercial provision and a change to the urban grain.
- A defined city centre: a more varied architecture across the Beaux-Arts grid would open the city centre to its sea and moor and welcome visitors.

The Vision influenced a new approach to building height in the city, expressed in the Joint Local Plan among others, and detailed in the Plymouth Tall Buildings Strategy of 2005. The Strategy identified possibilities for taller developments in areas immediately around the city centre and the potential for intensification within. Again, the Strategy identified the Plan for Plymouth's original intention for higher buildings. Indeed, some of the larger city centre buildings already had roof terrace storeys, while on others the intended terraces had never materialised. This new vision offered an opportunity to expand the land use in the city centre by explicitly, by subtly, building up. Within the next few years key buildings, including the former Barclays Bank and Post Office, offered residential roof terraces, beginning to bring life to an after dark 'downtown'. The increased height potential for the city centre continues to be recognised in the current planning framework for the city.

### 1.10 THE PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN

*The Plymouth City Centre Strategic Master plan is a crucial document for the City Centre. It forms part of the evidence to support the Joint Local Plan. It is strategic by nature, sets a framework and directs change and investment in the City Centre for the plan period up to 2036. It considers the forces of change, and provides a vision for the City Centre with themes for change including city centre living, intensification, reconnecting with neighbours and reanimating the public realm. Its purpose is to help direct change and investment in a way that brings the greatest benefit to Plymouth and its citizens, making sure that the city's extra-ordinary built, natural and historic environment and its neighbourhoods and communities thrive and can be sustained well into the next century in line with the provisions of the NPPF. All of these elements are important both in the context of the masterplan but also the CAAMP. In fact, the City Centre CAAMP and the Strategic Masterplan are aligned in many ways and are complementary in their proposals. Each consider the need to intensify the City Centre by bringing more people into the City and keeping them there longer, reuse vacant buildings, increase residential, reconnecting the area to its neighbours, re-animating the public realm and being adaptable.*



## 2.0: PLYMOUTH IN CONTEXT

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This section addresses the city centre in the context of Post-War reconstruction in Europe and in the UK and indicates through comparison, the value of the city centre as a Post-War planned area. A more detailed account of the comparatives is to be found in [Appendix B](#).

### 2.2 PLYMOUTH IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The wholesale redevelopment of the city centre of Plymouth, sits somewhere between the complete unity of design of Le Havre and the distinctly modern projects in Rotterdam and Royan. These are examples of the variety of approaches taken for the necessity to clear away and impose a modern plan or build new over a partially kept or old city plan. In that, these cities are all different. What links them in particular is the visual language and coherence of them as unified pieces of modern design and the experimental nature of some of the architecture. In planning terms, the urban relationship Plymouth city centre was designed to have with its administrative and cultural spaces was exemplary and surpassed the efforts in Le Havre and Rotterdam. Perret's plan was hamstrung by resistance in that regard and in Rotterdam, the closed off nature of the Ljinbaan meant that vistas were not as open as they were in Plymouth. Royan, the smallest of the reconstructed cities of Europe here, relied on architectural daring of individual buildings to convey modernity and rebuilding.

Plymouth by contrast, was measured, taking its planning and zoning ideas from the foremost thinkers in the country about town planning and using Beaux-Arts sensibilities as a starting point for axes, vistas and a sense of openness. Whilst there were certainly key, innovative buildings like the Civic Centre and the Pannier Market in particular, the majority of the buildings had their roots in a classical civic style. Armada Way bears comparison to the Ljinbaan for its precinct nature and indeed, after Princesshay in nearby Exeter it was an early exponent of a modern, shopping avenue. In its unity of appearance, Plymouth bears considerable comparison to Le Havre, with Portland stone, rather than concrete being prevalent. As a mixture of the sensibilities and expression discussed through the case histories here given, Plymouth is one of the largest and most coherent pieces of Post-War cityscape in Europe and in its planning, architecture and spatial interrelationships between functional areas, remains a unique expression of Post-War design in a European context, bringing together ideas that although found elsewhere, are blended to a unique degree in the city centre.



Exeter's Princesshay in 1970

#### QUICK FACTS

- A great many European cities lay in ruins following wartime destruction, the number that chose a specifically modern route to reconstruction was small, these include Le Havre and Royan in France, Rotterdam in the Netherlands and Hull and Coventry in the UK.
- The wholesale redevelopment of Plymouth city centre, sits somewhere between the complete unity of design of Le Havre and the distinctly modern projects in Rotterdam and Royan.
- Armada Way bears comparison to the Ljinbaan in Rotterdam for its precinct nature and after Princesshay in nearby Exeter it was an early exponent of a modern, shopping avenue.
- In a UK context, Plymouth is the pre-eminent Post-War planned city centre due to its ambition, scope, uniformity and completion.
- Although Plymouth has suffered loss of some key buildings, it is much less impactful than in other similar cities.
- Plymouth's city centre, for its survival, the variety of its 20th century buildings and the influence it had on UK city planning and urban design, is internationally important.







### 2.3 UK CONTEXT

Plymouth is the pre-eminent Post-War planned city centre in the country and there are two fundamental reasons for this. Firstly, the scale of its ambition as a planned city centre, is comparable to Le Havre in its scope, uniformity and completion. Its date, also places it at the vanguard of both the reconstructions and it was therefore instrumental in the development of the UK new towns. Perhaps the closest comparator in terms of style and size, would have been Swansea, but this was never completed as planned. The unity of the buildings in Plymouth belies the variety of high-quality modernism of different types and there is not one prominent style. Plymouth is therefore rich in its 20th century heritage and includes Post-War Scandinavian civic, Festival style, Brutalism and Expressionism. Later building, like the Theatre Royal, added to that list. Survival and designation have played a part in this and in comparison to Southampton, Exeter, Hull and Bristol in particular, Plymouth has retained much of the Post-War plan and the buildings and spaces that mark it out.

### 2.4 CONTEXT CONCLUSIONS

Plymouth's city centre, for its survival, the variety of its 20th century buildings and the influence it had on UK city planning and urban design, is internationally important. The unity and coherence of the plan, despite some alterations over time and some major interventions like Drakes Circus and the Beckley Point development remains visually and spatially intact. Like Le Havre, the shared materiality of the buildings brings an aesthetic unity but unlike Le Havre, the buildings have a greater variety. Royan, Exeter and Hull, along with Coventry, have all been impacted by the loss of key buildings and although Plymouth has also suffered this, it is much less impactful. Exeter, Plymouth's closest neighbour as a Post-War planned centre, has seen sweeping and irreversible loss of its Post-War heritage and this again, makes Plymouth exceptional in a UK context and indeed, a south-west regional one.

Plymouth city centre then, is comparable only to Le Havre, which since 2005, has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This is reflected in it being the UK city (outside of London) with the highest number of 20th century listed buildings in the country. The variety of its individual elements, but the coherence of the whole, is what distinguishes it primarily and indeed, it is comparable to Le Havre, as opposed to other UK cities, by its survival as a Post-War planned city.

Supporting analysis for the above conclusions can be found in [Appendix B](#).



*Church of Notre Dame, Royan in 1960*



*L'Avenue Foch Le Havre 1957*





## 3.0: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Plymouth city centre holds a number of important historic values that relate to its planning, the personnel involved and its architectural and design history. A Plan for Plymouth, published in March 1943 was a radical and comprehensive document that had implications for the planning of other cities in the UK throughout the Post-War period. Plymouth was the only city to retain its wartime planner and this ensured the city stayed ahead of all other UK cities in the process of peacetime reconstruction. It thus became an aspirational place for other war damaged towns and cities in the UK.

The quality and consistency of Plymouth's architecture has its roots in the nature of the plan from its earliest conception, which envisaged a city en fete, that is to say, a city in permanent celebration. This was conveyed fully in JDM Harvey's original plan drawings and these proved to be both decisive and pervasive as architects responded to the parameters of scale, massing and materiality and indeed, style, indicated by the plan.

Patrick Abercrombie was the foremost UK city planner of the Post-War period and Plymouth was his largest and most ambitious piece of urban design. An architect of international standing, Abercrombie's ideas and plan as contained in the London Plan (later the Greater London Plan) of 1944, became instrumental in the New Towns movement and his influence is still being felt in urban design today. James Paton Watson was Plymouth's City Engineer and to him and his department was left, largely, the translation of the plan into reality. His involvement as a notable designer and facilitator in his own right is often overlooked, but Paton Watson was instrumental in the success of Plymouth as a working, living city.

The list of architects who designed buildings in the city centre reads as a comprehensive run-down of the primary talents of the period. Plymouth remains, in its set piece planning and through its individual buildings, one of the most complete expressions of mid-century design and art in a UK and international context. As a result, it had considerable impact on later plans and on the New Towns that followed.

### QUICK FACTS

- The largest and most complete Post-War city plan in the UK.
- Contains a high concentration of 20th century heritage assets that are internationally significant as a group.
- Is illustrative of the collective political and social will and optimism that followed the devastation of World War II.
- Was designed by the UK's pre-eminent and most influential town planner of the 20th century with local assistance and support.
- The mid-century historic character of the buildings and streetscape remains legible and intact.
- Many of the key buildings are exemplars of mid-century British architecture designed by some of the most notable figures of UK 20th century architecture and design.





The visual and spatial qualities of Plymouth rest primarily on the plan and on the original vision for a modern city centre. The degree of freedom handed to the architects whose work lined the zoned areas of the plan, was tempered by the oversight of Crabtree and Tait whose involvement ensured a unity and coherence to the architecture that could have been lacking in the final schemes.

There have been detrimental impacts: the loss of Civic Square; the loss of key sightlines through the plan; and changes to street furniture and shop fronts are amongst those things, overall the plan remains legible. Testament arguably to the robust quality of its original design. The sense of place engendered by the plan makes it uniquely special as a city centre in an international context. Like Coventry, Exeter and the other bombed cities of Europe, the rebuilding after the War imbued Plymouth with a sense of civic pride. Memories of the Blitz and the immediate aftermath are now reaching a period where they will soon fade from collective living memory, but the values expressed in the plan and in the architecture remain legible.

Plymouth city centre is a singularly unique and special place. Nowhere in the UK is there a better surviving or more visually coherent example of the architecture, design and social spirit of the Post-War period. The plan has been impacted, some key buildings have been altered or lost, but comparatively, Plymouth remains the UK's most complete vision of the planned city centre







## PART B: THE CHARACTER OF PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE

This part of the CAAMP provides analysis and assessment of the character and appearance of the Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area and the way in which this contributes to its special interest. It covers different elements of character including townscape and spatial analysis, important views and setting as well as identifying the contribution different buildings make in an audit of heritage assets.

4.0 Location and Setting	23
5.0 Townscape and Spatial Analysis	27
6.0 Important Views and Landmark Buildings	41
7.0 Audit of Heritage Assets	59







## 4.0: LOCATION AND SETTING

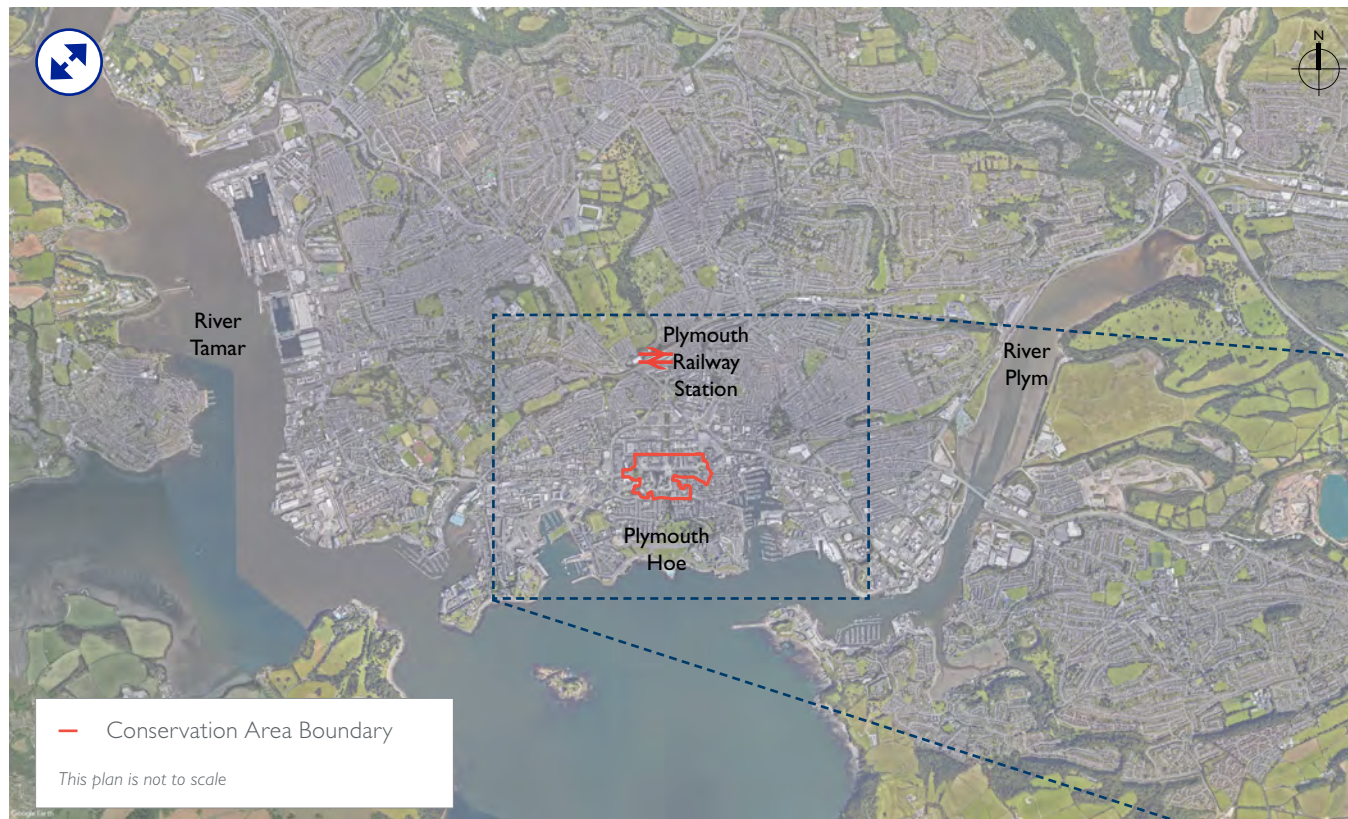
### 4.1 LOCATION

The Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area is located in the heart of Plymouth, north of the Hoe and south of Plymouth Railway Station. Plymouth itself is a port city enclosed by the River Plym to the east and the Tamar to the west, which forms the boundary between Devon and Cornwall. The rivers converge to form Plymouth Sound on the English Channel. **Plan 2** shows the Conservation Area within its wider context.

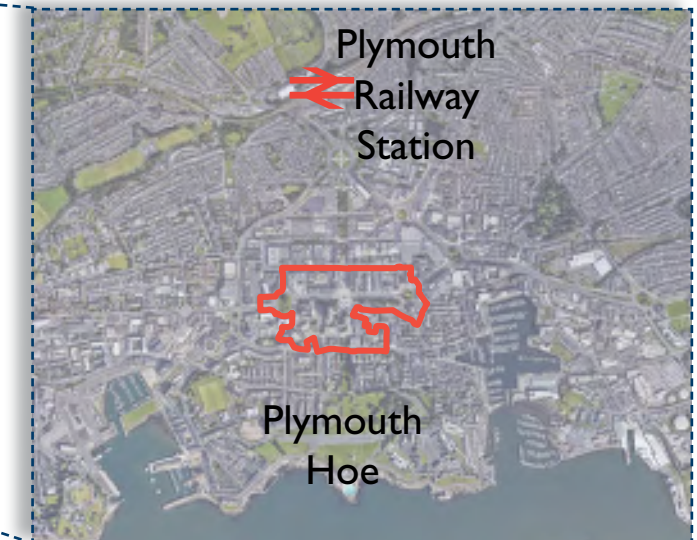
The coastal position of Plymouth led it to become first a trading port and subsequently an important naval dockyard. The consequence of the latter was severe bombardment of the city during World War II necessitating the centre to be rebuilt. The location of Plymouth is therefore critical to the understanding of how the Conservation Area developed.

#### QUICK FACTS

- The presence of the naval dockyard led to the wartime destruction of the city, prompting the need for redevelopment.
- The topography of the area, rising up to the north and south was a factor in the Post-War layout, Armada Way being aligned to make the most of long views.
- The wider Plan for Plymouth contributes to the understanding of the Conservation Area, in particular the rest of Armada Way and the Pannier Market.
- Other historic parts of the city, including the Guildhall and the Hoe, also contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area.



**Plan 2:** Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area within its wider context







## 4.2 TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the Conservation Area and its setting is an important part of the experience of the area and was undoubtedly a factor shaping the Post-War layout. The Conservation Area lies within a band of low-lying ground that extends between the Plym

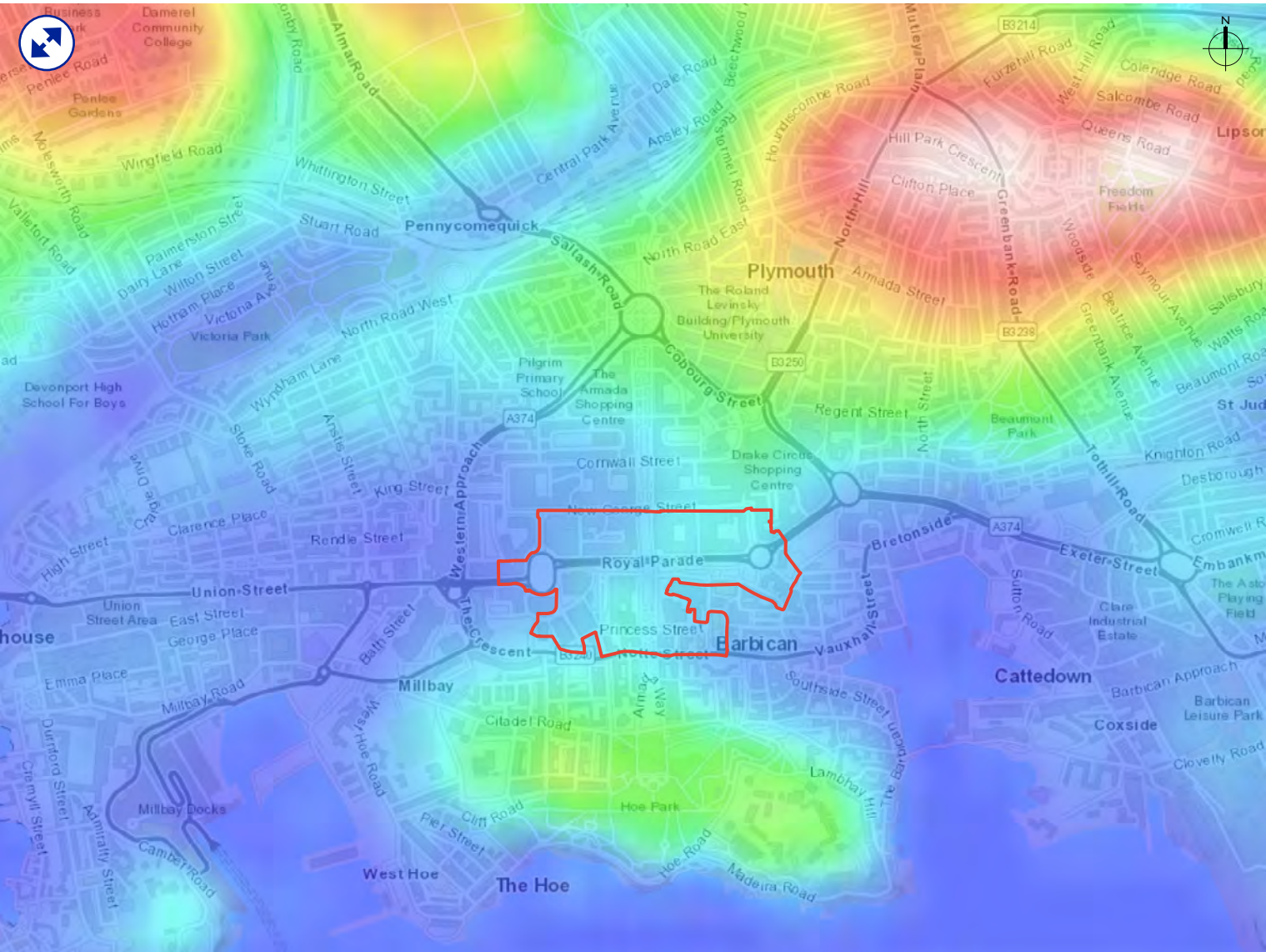
and Tamar rivers. To the south the ground rises up to the Hoe, which sits atop high limestone cliffs. The land also rises steadily to the north, peaking with North Hill to the north-east of the Conservation Area. The considerable changes in elevation allow for long views down Armada Way and from Hoe Park towards the

Civic Centre. Within the Conservation Area itself the line inclines gently from west to east which allows views along the long parallel roads of Royal Parade and New George Street. [Plan 3](#) shows the topography of the area.



*This view from the top of Armada Way at North Cross clearly demonstrates the dramatic topography of the city centre. The Conservation Area is largely within a valley with just the tower of the Civic Centre seen. The land rises again to the south of the Conservation Area up to the Hoe; the top of the Naval Memorial can be seen in this image with Smeaton's Tower also visible when there is less foliage on the trees.*





Conservation Area Boundary

This plan is not to scale

Plan 3: The topography of Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area and its setting

Ground Level

Lowest

Highest



## 4.3 SETTING

The Conservation Area encompasses the core of the area redeveloped in the Post-War period in accordance with Abercrombie and Paton Watson's 1943 Plan for Plymouth. However, the Plan, and the redeveloped area, extend beyond the Conservation Area boundaries and forms the immediate setting of much of the Conservation Area, particularly to the north. The Post-War layout and buildings of the wider Plan for Plymouth are critical to understanding and appreciating what is special about the Conservation Area. Armada Way, the Pannier Market, Frankfort Gate and Cornwall Street all make a considerable positive contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area and contributing to its special interest.

South and east of the Conservation Area the pre-war layout and buildings of the city centre survive, designated as The Hoe Conservation Area and Barbican Conservation Area respectively. The approach to Hoe Park continues the same alignment as Armada Way providing a connection physically and visually between the historic and Post-War parts of the city centre. This connection is important to the special interest of the Conservation Area. The Barbican is one of the most historic parts of Plymouth developing from the 13th century. Of particular relevance to the setting of the City Centre Conservation Area is the Guildhall, which faces the Civic Centre across the Civic Square, balancing the composition and the tower that is important in views along Armada Way and Royal Parade. Also making an important contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area is St Andrew's Church, the tower of which also features in views. This building, along with the Synagogue on Catherine Street, also contribute to the setting of the Conservation Area by reinforcing the so-called 'religious quarter' of this part of the Plan for Plymouth with the Post-War Unitarian and Baptist Churches.

The wider urban setting of the Conservation Area also contributes to its significance by ensuring it is appreciated as the centre of the city. The scale and distinctive form of the Civic Centre mean that it is visible from many places across the city, landmarking this area as its civic heart. Although not intervisible with the



*The Civic Centre from the Naval Memorial, which aligns with Armada Way, in Hoe Park*



*The Pannier Market, part of the Post-War redevelopment of the city centre and listed Grade II*



*Cornwall Street, part of the wider Post-War redevelopment envisaged within the 1943 Plan for Plymouth*



*St Andrew's Church and the Guildhall seen in relation to the Civic Centre from Royal Parade*





## 5.0: TOWNSCAPE AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS

### 5.1 STREET PATTERN

The layout of the Conservation Area is one of its most distinctive features and reasons for its special interest. The arrangement of streets and spaces is a refined version of Abercrombie and Paton Watson's 1943 Beaux-Arts Plan for Plymouth with its strong symmetry, grand axes, geometric forms and classical emphasis. This was coupled with the desire at the time to keep high-speed traffic separate from people.

The full area redeveloped is formed by an irregular pentagon edged by a ring road to the east and west, converging on new roundabouts Derry's Cross to the east, St Andrew's Cross and Charles Cross to the west and North Cross to the north. Forming a central spine is Armada Way, extending north to south from North Cross all the way to the Hoe. The route was designed to be a grand vista for public enjoyment, taking advantage of the topography to gain long views through the redeveloped city centre to the Naval Memorial and Smeaton's Tower on the Hoe.

On axis to Armada Way are numerous cross streets, the principal one being Royal Parade which is the main east to west route. Parallel to the north are: Mayflower Street; Cornwall Street; and New George Street, although only the latter is in the Conservation Area. To the south of Royal Parade are Princess Street and Notte Street, the latter one of the few streets in the Conservation Area to date from the pre-war period. There are limited north to south connections and these are generally used to create urban blocks such as Courtney Street and Bedford Way connecting New George Street and Royal Parade. Others simply lead to the car parks and service yards.

At its edges, the street layout is less rigid and integrates with the pre-war street pattern, particularly to the south-east, where Finewell Street and Princess Street retain their pre-war alignment, and the south-east which was not developed until later.

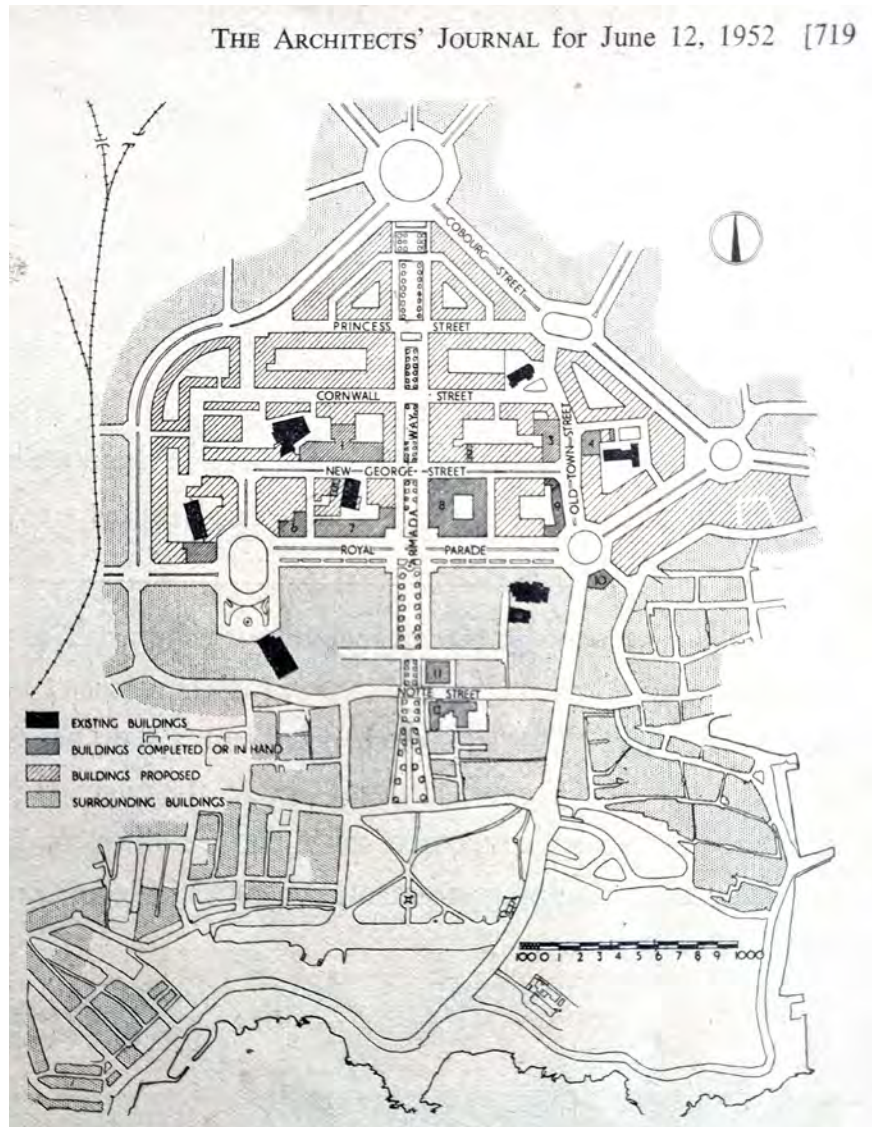
The layout envisioned by Abercrombie and enacted by Paton Watson and his team remains clearly evident and is the backbone of the buildings and public spaces it creates. The bold and confident nature of the layout sets Plymouth apart from many cities that underwent wartime destruction and rebuilding and makes an especially important contribution to the special interest of the Conservation Area. The parts of the planned layout which are not within the Conservation Area, but are within its setting, also strongly contribute.

#### QUICK FACTS

- The street pattern is based on Beaux-Arts principals of symmetry, geometry, grand axes and classicism.
- The central spine of Armada Way was designed as a grand vista for public enjoyment.
- Armada Way and the multiple parallel cross streets create the backbone for the buildings and public spaces.
- Building heights and plot dimensions were determined by the authorities creating a visual harmony and a hierarchy across the Conservation Area.
- Buildings are four- to five-storeys in principal streets, lowering to three-storeys in more secondary areas. One- and two-storey buildings are also present, such as the churches and the Council House.
- The Civic Centre is the tallest building at 13-storeys, designed as a landmark and symbol of the rebirth of Plymouth.
- The original Plan for Plymouth had strict zoning of different uses, although this has been diluted and will continue to be to ensure the city can meet changing circumstances.
- Open spaces were designed to be enjoyed by all Plymothians and was an integral part of the redevelopment of the city centre with streets and spaces being generous in their dimensions.
- The Civic Square is the principal public space and retains most of its original layout and fractures; its importance is demonstrated through its Grade II Registered Park designation.
- Original surface treatments and street furniture survive in places, but much has been lost and, in some instances, insensitively replaced.
- Buildings have their roots in classicism having bases defined by canopies, grandly proportioned middles and terraced, attic tops.
- Portland stone is the principal cladding material used in the Conservation Area, accompanied by granite, limestone and slate. Concrete is used but sparingly.
- Decorative ornamentation is common, particularly the use of mosaics and carved stone reliefs.







1952 plan of the layout for Plymouth city centre (revised from the 1943 Plan for Plymouth), which is very similar to what was enacted.



Aerial map of the street layout of Plymouth city centre today. Base plan © GoogleEarth 2021



## 5.2 SCALE AND BUILDING FORM

The planned nature and zoning of uses of the city centre resulted in a strict hierarchy of buildings across the Conservation Area. The plot dimensions, building widths and cornice lines of buildings were pre-determined by the city authorities leading to a visual harmony to the street scene whilst still allowing for creativity and individualism. Buildings are generally large in their scale and massing, but this is comfortably accommodated within the broad streets and spacious public spaces. Most buildings have a horizontal emphasis to their massing and articulation and flat roofs. This serves to emphasise the vertical elements within the Conservation Area and its setting namely the Civic Centre tower with its butterfly roof, the Guildhall tower and the church towers and spires.

Along Royal Parade, buildings are of a monumental scale, filling entire blocks, extending back to New George Street and have long frontages to Royal Parade, Armada Way and the cross streets and large yards and service areas between. Royal Parade has a building height of four- to five-storeys including top floor terraces in many cases, whereas the narrower and more domestic and subserviently-scaled New George Street is a consistent three-storeys. This change in height also deals with the gradual gradient upwards to the north. Slightly taller tower elements are present at the corner of Pearl Assurance House and Dingles (now House of Fraser) which mark the entrance to Armada Way from the Civic Square; the latter has unfortunately been visually compromised by the 1980s extensions following a fire.

The buildings around Derry's Cross and St Andrew's Cross are similarly scaled to those on Royal Parade but are generally more linear blocks following the street frontages. On the south side of Royal Parade are the Theatre Royal and the Civic Centre (the Guildhall and St Andrew's Church being within the Barbican Conservation Area). The Theatre Royal (Grade II) is a large building occupying its own island site. The stepped, geometric form of the building offsetting its scale.

The tallest and most prominent building is the Civic Centre (Grade II listed), which rises to 15-storeys and comprises a two-storey plinth and a 13-storey slab block tower with a butterfly roof. This building was deliberately the only tall structure in the redevelopment plan and is important for being the physical representation of the rebirth of Plymouth and the hope and confidence the city had following wartime devastation. The Civic Centre is a beacon, visible from across the Conservation Area and wider city. It is often seen with the Guildhall tower, collectively representing the pre- and Post-War identities of Plymouth.

South of the Civic Square there is more variety in building form and height. Detached buildings, originally all in office use, occupy the block between Princess Street and Notte Street ranging from four- to five-storeys although the storey heights differ. There has been some roof extension, which has increased the height of some buildings leading to an overall taller character than intended by the original planning.

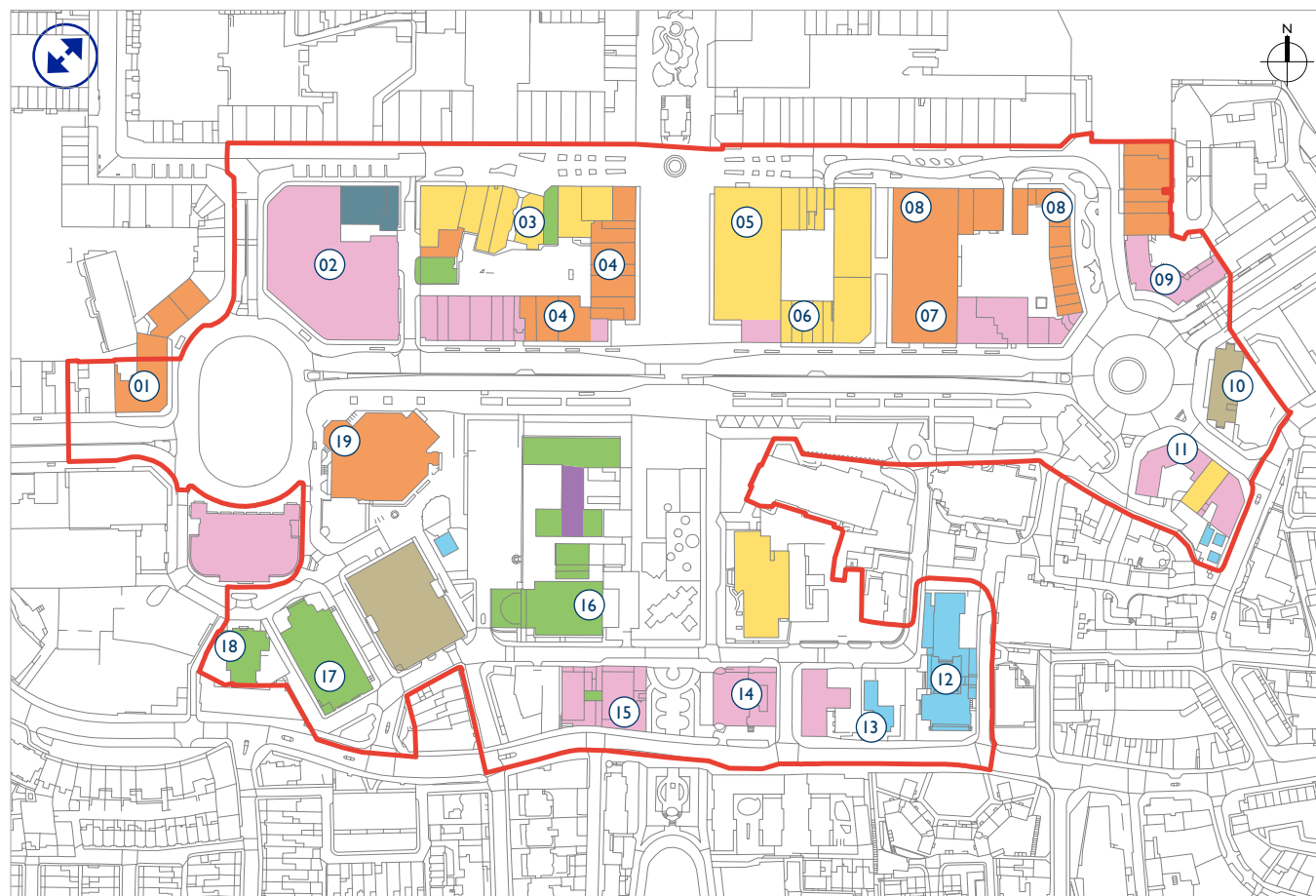
There are also lower buildings in the Conservation Area, of one- to two-storeys, but these are by no means less important or prominent, these include: the Baptist and Unitarian Churches of the Religious Quarter; the Council House; the Combined Court; and the Athenaeum. The churches at the south-east corner of the Conservation Area have distinctive pitched or hipped roofs and tall spires, which give them prominence in the street scene and certain views. The Athenaeum and Council House are raised on pilotis, increasing their stature and feature portal framing giving them a distinctive appearance compared to the surrounding buildings.

**Plan 4** overleaf shows the number of storeys of different buildings in the Conservation Area.

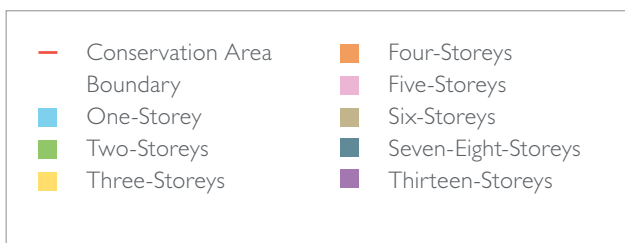


*The Unitarian and Baptist Churches, distinctive for their pitched roofs and spires*





Plan 4: Building heights by storey within the Conservation Area



Many buildings across the city centre are of mixed heights within one building footprint. Some buildings also have tower elements or spires which extend over the main roof height.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 01 British Gas House: four-storeys plus tower.  | 11 Royal Building: five regular storeys including attic (ground floor double-height atrium to front; basement storey behind making six-storeys to rear). |
| 02 Cooperative Building: three main storeys plus two terrace storeys.   | 12 Baptist Church: double height church building plus spire; single height ancillary buildings.  |
| 03 Western Morning News: three-storeys plus attic storey.   | 13 Unitarian Church: double height church building plus spire; single height ancillary buildings.  |
| 04 Pearl Assurance House: four storeys plus terrace in places and corner tower (up to seven-storeys).                               | 14 Former Barclays Bank: three-storeys as originally built; double height glass terrace storeys subsequently added.                                      |
| 05 Dingles/House of Fraser: three main storeys plus two (rear) or three (front) terraces. Corner tower (up to five to six storeys). | 15 Princess Court: five-storeys to Princess Street, four to Notte Street.  |
| 06 No.30-36 Royal Parade: three-storeys plus two terraces.  | 16 Council House: Double height chamber with ground floor storey. Lower side storey and bridge block to Civic Centre.                                    |
| 07 Debenhams: three main storeys and integral terrace storey above cornice.   | 17 Former Reel Cinema: entrance lobby storey; full height cinema storey.   |
| 08 South side of New George Street (east): All three-storeys plus semi-open terrace storey.   | 18 Athenaeum: ground floor lobby; second floor projecting room; full height theatre.   |
| 09 Post Office: four original storey plus recent terrace storey.  | 19 Theatre Royal: incorporating double height lobby, theatre auditorium; three office storeys above large service entrance to rear in blockwork tower.   |
| 10 National Provincial Bank: building includes treble-height atrium to front and copper attic storey.                               |  |

*This plan is not to scale*



View along Royal Parade showing the wide building frontages



The entrance to Armada Way showing the taller tower elements forming a gateway



The buildings around St Andrew's Cross are more linear in their massing but are similar height to those on Royal Parade



Civic Centre and the Council House, despite the difference in height both buildings are prominent in their own ways





*New George Street has a lower scale of three-storeys as it is a more secondary street*



*The stepped massing of the Theatre Royal*



*Midland House, Berkeley Square (former Barclays Bank) and Princess Court, located between Princess Street and Notte Street*



*Derry's Cross with the Cooperative Building and Theatre Royal with the Civic Centre in the background*



### 5.3 LAND USE

Plymouth city centre has a mix of uses as is characteristic of an urban centre and this contributes to the special interest of the Conservation Area. The original Plan for Plymouth segregated uses with a religious quarter in the south-east of the Conservation Area, the civic zone centred on the Civic Square, business zones south of the Civic Square and the north side of Royal Parade and on either side of Armada Way (see [Plan 5](#) overleaf). Whilst this clear delineation between different uses contributes to the significance of the area and has led to different characteristics in terms of scale, architecture and appearance in each, it has led to inflexibility and consequent lack of investment within the city centre. The strict zones have begun to be diluted and is likely to continue to do so in order to remain a viable city centre.

Civic Square remains one of the principal land uses within the Conservation Area and is perhaps the most important. It continues to make a considerable contribution to the special interest of the area. Armada Way once took traffic but is today fully pedestrianised extending the civic amenity space. The Civic Square is also well used by Plymothians. The Combined Court, Council House and the Guildhall (although outside this Conservation Area) all contribute to this use but the Civic Centre itself is to be converted to residential use, slightly reducing this strong characteristic of the Conservation Area.

Retail is the other principal land use focussed along the ground floor of the north side of Royal Parade, Armada Way and New George Street and while retail patterns are changing this use continues to be a prominent and important characteristic of the area. Cafés and restaurant uses are beginning to replace some of the pure retail, however this has no impact on the special interest of the Conservation Area. However, there is a decline in largescale retail, namely department stores, of which the Conservation Area has several. These uses contribute to the special interest of the area and their loss will dilute this; however, it is important for viable new uses to be found as the city centre evolves. The Pannier Market, although just outside the Conservation Area, is also an important contributor to retail use within the city centre.

There has also been a reduction in office use, particularly along the north side of Royal Parade, which was originally occupied by the headquarters of banks and insurance companies above ground floor retail. However, many banks and businesses remain, and this type of use continues to contribute to the Conservation Area. Former office buildings and department stores, such as the Cooperative (latterly Derry's), have been repurposed for hotel, student accommodation and restaurant use, which although not part of the original Plan for Plymouth, add to the diversity of use in the city centre. Within the large urban blocks occupied by the office and department stores are yards mainly used for car parking.

The religious quarter comprises several churches and a synagogue and extends across both the Plymouth City Centre and Barbican Conservation Areas. This demonstrates the efforts of the plan to integrate with the surrounding city at its edges. By segregating this use, this quarter is much quieter and more contemplative than the busy main thoroughfares and public spaces and is an important characteristic of this area.

Entertainment venues, the Atheneum, former Reel Cinema and the Theatre Royal are grouped at the eastern edge of the Conservation Area. This important leisure use contribute to the overall character of the areas as a city centre.

There is currently virtually no residential use within the Conservation Area and the only purpose-built housing part of the Plan for Plymouth was in Frankfort Gate. However, it is likely that residential use will increase over the coming years, beginning with the transformation of the Civic Centre into apartments.





Conservation Area Boundary

Retail Quarter

Business and Retail Zone

Civic Quarter

Entertainment Quarter

Religious Quarter

Business Zone

This plan is not to scale

Plan 5: The different use zones established in the Post-War Plan for Plymouth.



The religious quarter remains strongly defined, this image shows the Unitarian Church to the left, the spire and pastoral centre of the Baptist Church to the right and, within the Barbican Conservation Area, St Andrew's Church tower and Plymouth Synagogue along Catherine Street.



The Civic Quarter is the heart of the Conservation Area comprising the Civic Centre and Council House (left) facing the Combined Court and Guildhall across the Civic Square



Retail is one of the principal uses in the Conservation Area, this image shows New George Street, which is one of the main retail streets in the city.



Leisure and entertainment uses are focused on Derry's Cross, this image shows the Reel Cinema (currently vacant) and the Athenium





#### 5.4 OPEN SPACES AND PUBLIC REALM

An egalitarian approach to public realm was a key principle of the Plan for Plymouth. Streets and spaces were included in the Post-War redevelopment of the city centre that were to be used and enjoyed by all Plymothians. The benefits of access to outside space and fresh air are principles which remain important today and the Conservation Area boasts generous streets and large public spaces.

The most significant public space is the Civic Square, aligned along the key route of Armada Way and sited between the Guildhall and Civic Centre. The layout of the Square dates to the late 1950s and is a piece of Post-War landscape design of considerable importance, demonstrated by its designation as a registered park and garden (Grade II). Much of the original design remains intact, including the L-shaped pool, biomorphic raised beds and hard landscaping. Mature trees retained from a pre-war graveyard and those planted in the 1950s, soften the space, however the shrubbery in the raised beds now obscure the original views through the Square along Armada Way. The introduction of traffic and car parking to the edges of the Square in the 1970s and the introduction of unsympathetic structures and street furniture has diluted the original intent; the former particularly impacting on the pedestrian experience of the Square. The café in the Square increases and encourages activity and use of the space by the public. The Square contributes considerably to the special interest of the Conservation Area, both through its appearance and its continued public use.

Armada Way, the north to south axis through the redeveloped city centre, running all the way from the railway station to the Hoe, is perhaps the most important public street in the city centre. Although only the southern part lies within the Conservation Area boundary, its whole length is a set piece of Beaux-Arts urban design, which was the driving discipline of the Plan for Plymouth.

Although originally containing roadways either side of a central landscaped zone, this route is today fully pedestrianised which has enhanced the civic amenity provision within the city centre and aligns with the original concepts of the Post-War plan. The street is extremely broad, creating a generous boulevard for shoppers and other visitors to the city centre.

Royal Parade is the other important public street in the Conservation Area. Its southside has a European avenue quality with rows of trees, raised lawns setting the buildings back from the road front. A public garden in front of St Andrew's Church and the Guildhall Square provide further public amenity at the eastern end of the street. Both have been mainly given over to car parking in recent decades, which detracts from the contribution it makes. However the original surface of some of the bowtie paving in Civic Square and the triangular paving outside the Guildhall survives and this is a distinctive feature of the original landscaping of this area. By contrast the north side of Royal Parade has a more urban character and is bustling with shoppers and those using the multiple bus stands, which today are an unfortunate prominent feature in the street scene along with the central guard rails of the road and the insensitively designed items of street furniture such as litter bins.

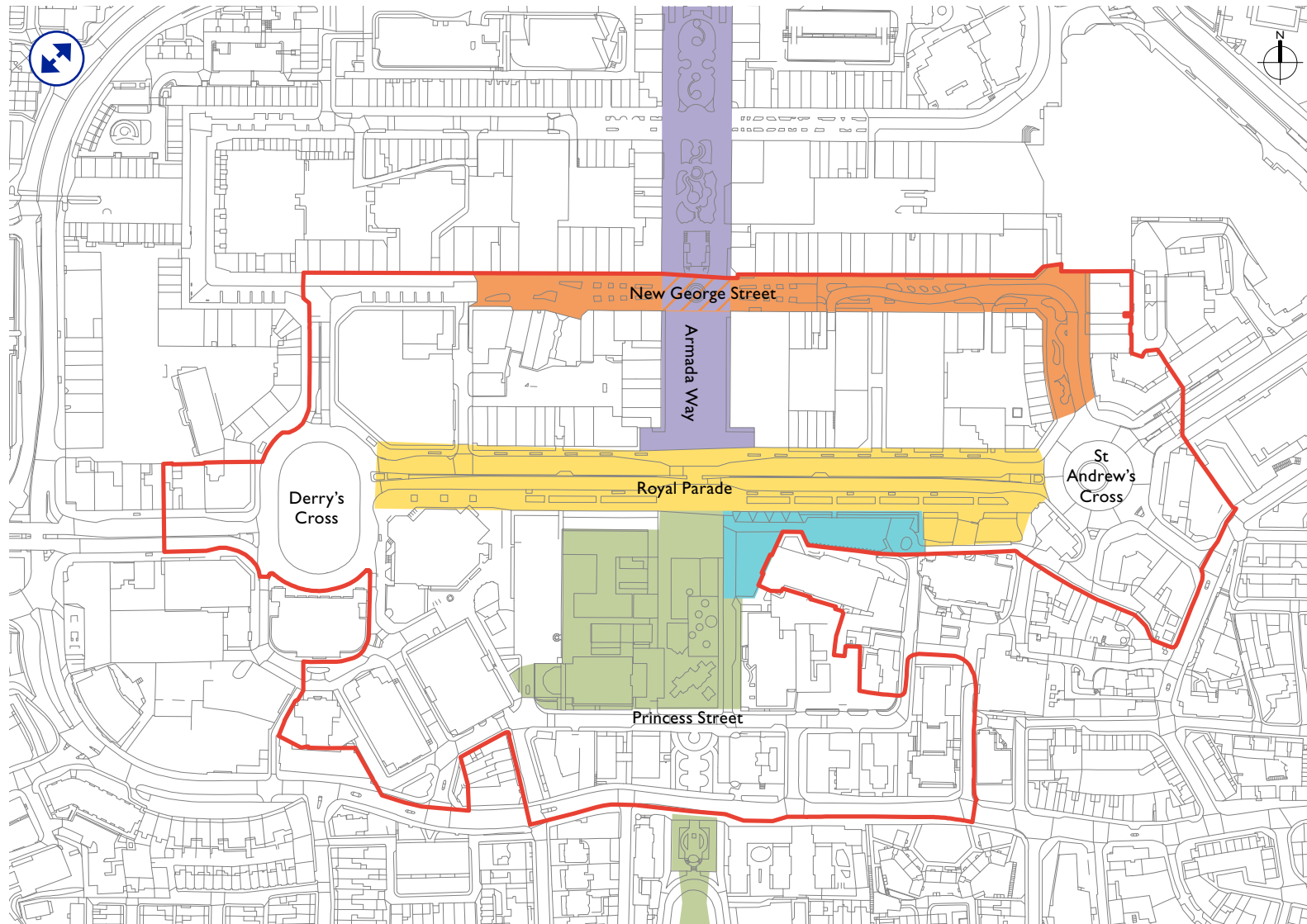
New George Street is also mostly pedestrianised, although it originally also took traffic. The landscaping dates to the 1980s with now mature shrubs and trees. It is also of a generous width and well used by the public. Other streets in the Conservation Area take both pedestrians and vehicles and contribute much less to the public amenity. The yards and alleys between Royal Parade and New George Street are in use as service yards or for surface car parking.

The different open spaces in the Conservation Area are shown on **Plan 6** overleaf.

#### Surface Treatments and Street Furniture

Surface treatments across the Conservation Area are of mixed material and quality. Some areas of historic finishes survive, notably the bowtie and triangular paving at the Civic Square and Guildhall respectively. Other finishes are high quality, durable and sympathetic to the Post-War character of the Conservation Area. These include the gridded paving on the north side of Royal Parade, which is similar in appearance to the original paving in the street, and linear contrasting paving patterns in Old Town Lane, Armada Way and around the Royal Theatre. These finishes, comprising Plymouth limestone, slate and granite, particularly those that are original, contribute positively to the appearance of the Conservation Area but some, such as those in Civic Square are in need of maintenance. Elsewhere, there has been replacement of surface treatments over the decades with utilitarian concrete paving or brick sets, which have often become damaged and patched. This is particularly the case along the south side of Royal Parade and the curve-patterned brick paving in New George Street. These finishes detract from the Conservation Area's special interest and represent opportunities for enhancement.

Street furniture is likewise of mixed quality. Where historic items survive, such as lamp-posts in Royal Parade and Civic Square, these make an important contribution to the appearance of the area, although most have undergone alteration since their installation. Otherwise, street furniture is mainly of modern designs, a mix of metal and timber seating, an array of different bollard designs and oversized litter bins for example. Generally, these distract from the historic character of the public spaces they are within and are detracting features. However, some items, such as the lamp-posts in the centre of Royal Parade, are of a design that is sympathetic to the Post-War character and therefore make a positive contribution.



Plan 6: Important public amenity spaces and streets within the Conservation Area

### Registered Parks and Gardens

The Civic Square is designated as a Grade II registered park and garden of special historic interest. Whilst not a statutory designation, registered parks are of national significance which is given material consideration in the planning decisions.

The Hoe to the south of the Conservation Area is also designated as a Grade II Registered Park.

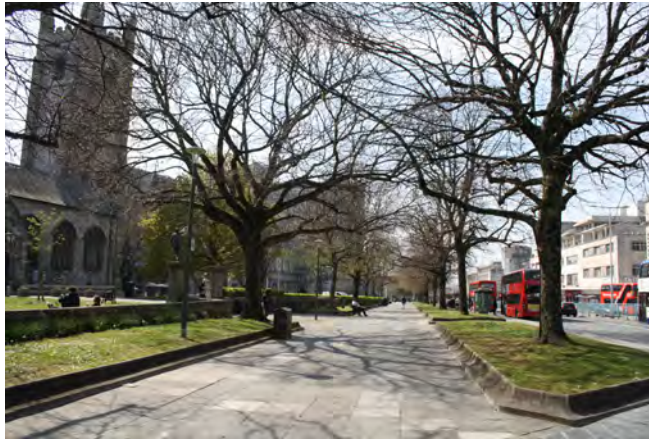
- Conservation Area Boundary
- Civic Square Registered Park
- Armada Way
- Royal Parade
- Guildhall Square
- New George Street

*This plan is not to scale*





*The Civic Square, the principal public space in the Conservation Area, its importance is highlighted by its status as a Grade II registered park and garden*



*Avenue-character of the south side of Royal Parade*



*Bowtie or triangular pattern surface treatment in front of the Guildhall*



*The broad, fully pedestrianised boulevard of Armada Way*



*Original Post-War lamp-post (the lanterns have been replaced)*



## 5.5 MATERIALS AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

An important part of Abercrombie's vision for the redevelopment of Plymouth was architectural consistency and harmony. This is achieved not only through controlling building heights and widths within the different use zones but through the materials used to clad and ornament. There is however pleasant variety to the architecture achieved by using different architects across the estate. The appearance of buildings in terms of their materials and architectural style contributes greatly to the character of the Conservation Area.

Portland stone is the predominant cladding material in the Conservation Area, being used for all the buildings on the north side of Royal Parade, the Civic Centre and Council House, Berkeley Square (formerly Barclays Bank) and the Royal Bank of Scotland building amongst others. Although not a local material, the use of Portland stone supports the classical emphasis taken within the Post-War redevelopment.

Other more local materials also feature including Devon granite and Plymouth limestone to the Civic Centre and Council House and slate cladding for the Combined Court. These materials also feature within other buildings, often alongside the Portland stone, and were used for the original surface treatments for example, slate and limestone banding surviving in the Civic Square.

Concrete is also used, although not widely, the Theatre Royal is perhaps the most important concrete building within the Conservation Area, clad in concrete blockwork, and the Pannier Market, just outside, is listed for its ingenious reinforced concrete shell roof. Other concrete buildings are the Theatre Royal Car Park and Midland House, which are both rough-cast and Brutalist in style. Rough-cast concrete is also used for low boundary walls and raised beds. Brick and concrete cladding are used more frequently in the later phases of development, in New George Street for example but Portland stone is still dominant.

Roofs are generally flat and therefore have no material differentiation, the exceptions to this are the Unitarian and Baptist Churches which feature pitched copper roofs and spires and the attic storey of the Royal Bank of Scotland building is also copper-clad. Windows are generally slender, metal-framed casements although there is some use of timber.

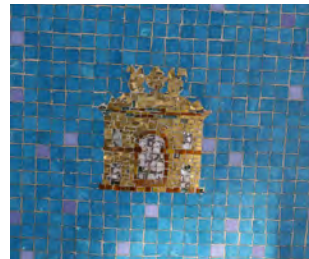
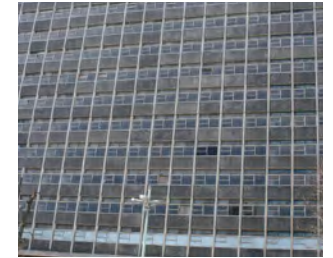
Buildings have their roots in classicism, particularly those along the north side of Royal Parade, comprising clearly defined base, middle and top. Canopies are frequently used to define the base and attic storeys are often set back behind a roof terrace. The middles have grand proportions often with pilasters to bring some vertical emphasis to the otherwise generally horizontal proportions of buildings.

Most buildings include some decorative ornamentation to their elevations including carved stone reliefs and figures, lettering and mosaics. Mosaic tiles are used for the Council House columns and within the portal entrance of the Royal Bank of Scotland building; the latter featuring symbols drawn from the histories of Plymouth and the bank. Glazed bricks and dal de verre glass are also used as decoration for the Cooperative Building and Combined Court respectively. Metal railings to attic terraces are also present to some buildings, painted white or pastel shades. The copper roofs and clerestory windows of the combined courts are notable features in the areas from which these elements are visible.





## Materials and Architectural Features





## 6.0: IMPORTANT VIEWS AND LANDMARK BUILDINGS

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area represents one of the most far-reaching Post-War reconstruction plans and has been designated because of the scale of its survival and its uniqueness. Within it, this uniqueness is upheld and embodied in particular vistas, views and glimpses and by particular buildings. This section identifies the most important views and landmark buildings and highlights what makes them special and how they contribute to the Conservation Area. It should be noted that nearly all buildings in the Conservation Area and general views within the townscape also contribute to the overall character and understanding of its special interest and their omission from this section does not mean they are not of significance.

### 6.2 IMPORTANT VIEWS

The way in which the Conservation Area is experienced is primarily visual, that is through the experience of the appearance of the area. Views may be static or dynamic, long or short, channelled or panoramic, designed or incidental.

The grid plan of the Plan for Plymouth created a number of deliberate view axis, both from inside and outside the area. Buildings were carefully placed to be framed by streetscapes: from the strength of the initial proposal for the Armada Way boulevard, affording views towards the Hoe; to the smallest of glimpses, such as that gleaned from the Barbican down Palace Street across to Catherine Street where the spire of the Baptist Street, frequently lit by a western sunset, marries old and new.

This section identifies the most important and strongest of these views and glimpses. However, it should be noted that seasonal glimpses, such as those from Hoe Park in winter, or those between any buildings on the periphery of the Conservation Area are too numerous to mention. The city centre was intended to be seen, and its buildings have been deliberately framed.

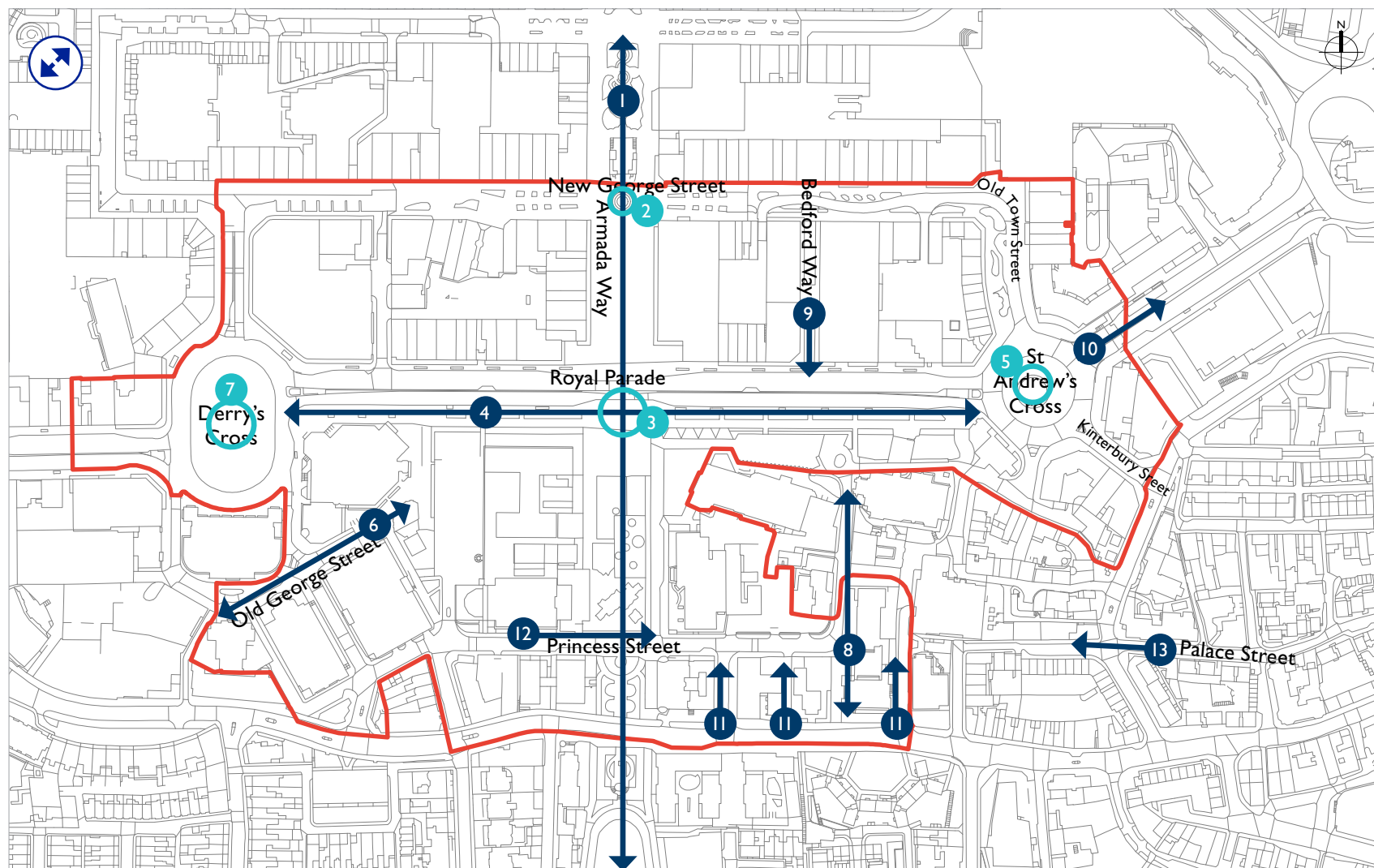
The most important views are described over the following paragraphs and shown on [Plan 7](#) overleaf.

#### QUICK FACTS

- Nearly all buildings in the Conservation Area and general views within the townscape contribute to the overall character and understanding of its special interest but some views, vistas and landmark buildings particularly embody and exemplify this special interest.
- Views along Armada Way and Royal Parade, the two most important streets in the Conservation Area, are of particular importance, both containing many landmark buildings including Dingles, Pearl Assurance and the Civic Centre.
- The view from the Athenaeum towards the Victorian clocktower and the Civic Centre perhaps most exemplifies the success of compromise achieved within the Plan.
- The Baptist and Unitarian Churches are important landmarks with their spires visible from the surrounding area.







- Conservation Area Boundary
- Panoramic View Points
- ↔ View Corridors
- Linear Views

*This plan is not to scale*

*Click on the view number to be taken to the description of that view*

**Plan 7:** Important views within, into and out of the Conservation Area



## Armada Way: View Corridor (1), Sundial Panorama (2) and Twin Axes Panorama (3)

Armada Way forms the backbone of the Conservation Area and was, from its earliest conception, designed to hold the Plan for Plymouth together, providing a broad boulevard from the mainline railway station to the Hoe. Its conception therefore was as a thoroughfare that both literally and figuratively tied the city together and to the rest of the country. It was originally an open vista, sloping down from its highest point at North Cross, down to the Civic Square, where it begins to rise again up to the Hoe. Views along Armada Way both from within the Conservation Area and its setting, therefore make a significant contribution to its special interest, however these have begun to be compromised by the original planting schemes reaching maturity and subsequent additional tree planting. The view corridor (1 on Plan 7) in both directions along the full length of Armada Way, both within the Conservation Area and beyond its boundaries is therefore one of the most important to the special interest of the Conservation Area.

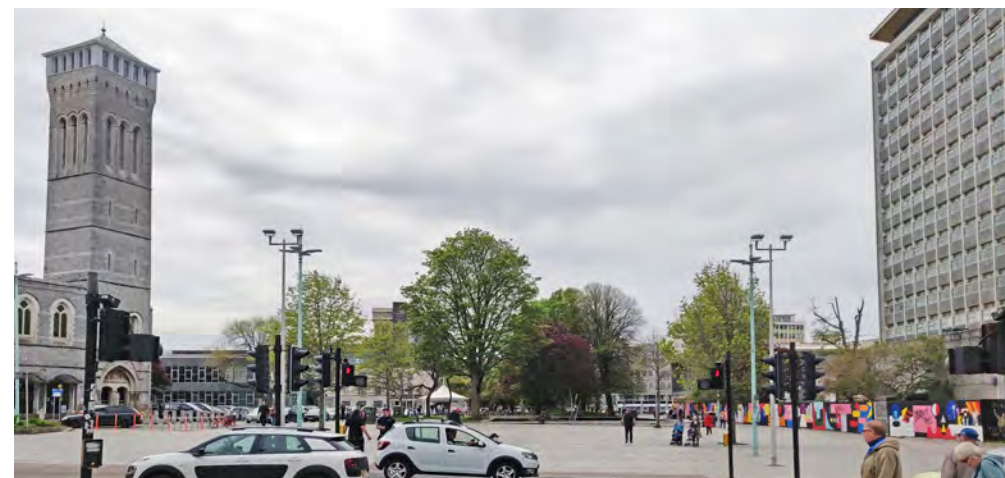
Views from the northern end of Armada Way look down to the city centre but also across to the Hoe, indicated by the sight of Smeaton's Tower and the Naval Memorial. Initially open to road traffic, the wide boulevard had carriageways down either side, with large lawns between. The Braille Garden at its northern end was the exception to this otherwise plain aspect. Following its pedestrianisation in the 1980s, curved raised beds lined in composite stone and decorative planting characterised the boulevard north of the Conservation Area. Trees both in the central planted area and the pedestrian avenues on either side have matured and now unfortunately screen the best views down to the Civic Centre, the Guildhall tower from the upper stretches of Armada Way, although there is more visibility in the winter months.

South of Royal Parade, the landscaping of the Civic Square is remarkably unchanged though again, the maturity of the trees and shrubs has diluted some of the formality of the garden, and subsequent commemorative plantings have also, in their successful establishment, begun to conceal the formal views north and south out of the Square that once existed. From the very southern part of Armada Way between Princess Street and Notte Street, the tree planting is less mature and views up to the Hoe park and Naval Memorial remain clearly visible.

Two panoramas offer full, 360-degree views (2 and 3 on Plan 7). Firstly, at the junction of Armada Way and New George Street, a sundial fountain designed by artist Carole Vincent to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada offers views down the axes of New George Street and Armada Way. Secondly, at the junction of Royal Parade, views across the city centre's two main axes take in a full panorama including many of the city's landmark buildings and views.



View north up Armada Way from Royal Parade



View south into the Civic Square and along Armada Way from Royal Parade





## Royal Parade: View Corridor (4)

Royal Parade forms the east to west axis of the Plan for Plymouth, bookended by the St Andrew's Cross and Derry's Cross roundabouts at each end. It links the two new approach roads into the city, and brings the buses from the orbiting new suburban neighbourhoods that are such an important part of the Post-War reconstruction. At one end, Royal Parade links to the old town of the Barbican and the A38 towards Exeter, and at the other end, to Union Street, to the ferry ports at Millbay and Devonport. This connectivity is still the case, and although traffic congestion is a problem in the city centre, Royal Parade remains an important through route. On its north side the earliest and most elaborate of the commercial buildings front on to a wide pavement. On its south side, the tree-lined avenue that fronts the Guildhall and St Andrew's Church provides the pedestrian thoroughway.

This southern side allows for the entirety of the monumental aspect of the early commercial buildings to be fully appreciated, giving ample space to stand back and look. Views east and west, from both sides, provide the long context of the city plan; the extensive lateral layout gives contextualising views of each side's landmark buildings all the way along. There has been some alteration at each end of Armada Way through the introduction of more recent buildings, although efforts to integrate these, such as use of triangular motifs on the Barcode, and the replacement of the extruding Golden Hinde of the former Drake's Cinema by a similarly scaled version on the Grosvenor Casino, speaks to the capacity of the city centre to accommodate change.

The multitude of modern bus stands, greater in size and quantity than within the original scheme, add visual clutter to view, particularly those east and west along the street and cramping the visual understanding of the ground floor shop fronts which themselves have undergone considerable alteration. Additionally, the proliferation of street signs, perhaps inevitable considering the importance of the traffic interchanges, interrupt east to west views at each end of Royal Parade at ground level.

To the south-east of the street, the flagged pedestrianised space around the Bank pub, the clocktower, and the Theatre Royal can be glimpsed from Royal Parade, a collection of buildings that complement each other despite the gap in years.



View east along Royal Parade from Derry's Cross



View west down Royal Parade from St Andrew's Cross

### St Andrew's Cross: Panorama (5)

The roundabout that forms the centre of St Andrew's Cross contains a raised circular pond with a fountain. From within the roundabout, the 360-degree view takes in the striking landmark buildings of the National Provincial Bank; the Royal building; the Post Office building; and Norwich Union House; as well as views down Royal Parade, down Exeter Street to Charles Cross, down Kinterbury Street into the old town, to St Andrew's Church, and up New George Street, absorbing the impressive gateway formed by the two corner buildings. These views exist at all pedestrian points around the roundabout, allowing the strength of the designed vistas and views to be properly seen.



View from St Andrew's Cross down Kinterbury Street framed by the National Provincial Bank, the Royal building



View south from St Andrew's Cross to the old town and to St Andrew's Church





### Old George Street: View Corridor ⑥

From the Athenaeum, the view across the Reel Cinema towards the Victorian clocktower, Theatre Royal and its car park, the Bank pub, and the Civic Centre perhaps most exemplifies the success of compromise achieved within the Plan for Plymouth. The view takes in the most modernist of the plan's buildings (Athenaeum and Civic Centre), three pre-war survivals (the Bank, clocktower and Reel Cinema), and the newest of the plan's 'entertainment' buildings (the Theatre Royal), as well as a glimpse of the Dingles building. From Old George Street, by the side of the Theatre Royal, the view is reversed, with the framed glazed face of the Athenaeum at its terminus. Along this view corridor, there are side glimpses of the wider city centre, of particular interest is the view north towards the squat tower of the former Gas Board building (the western terminus of Royal Parade), the undulating roof of the Pannier Market, and the Cooperative building.



View south-east along Old George Street to the clocktower and Athenaeum



View from the Athenaeum towards the Victorian clocktower, Theatre Royal and its car park, the Bank pub and the Civic Centre



### Derry's Cross: Panorama (7)

Forming the eastern end of Royal Parade, Derry's Cross is an important anchor within the Conservation Area, along with St Andrew's Cross at its western end. Around Derry's Cross roundabout several viewpoints exist in which views eastwards take in Royal Parade, as well as viewpoints where the Theatre Royal frames the Civic Centre, clocktower and Bank. Views north take in the Cooperative building, Portland stone buildings on the western side of the roundabout, with the undulating roof of the Pannier Market framed between.



*View north-west across Derry's Cross to the Pannier Market*





### Catherine Street: View Corridor (8)

From outside St Andrew's Church, located within the Barbican Conservation Area, looking south, the religious precinct can be appreciated. Prestyn House, the synagogue, the Baptist and Unitarian churches all form part of the view. Looking north, the view takes in a glimpse of the north side of Royal Parade. As Catherine Street meets Princess Street, views extend in all directions, taking in the Combined Courts, Civic Centre, churches, Barclays building and other office buildings.



View north up Catherine Street from Notte Street taking in the Baptist and Unitarian Churches



View south along Catherine Street



## Bedford Way (9)

From New George Street, the view south along Bedford Way and across Royal Parade frames the Guildhall with its surviving Victorian elevation. The zig-zag elevated bridge between the buildings either side of Bedford Way has unfortunately had its glass sides obscured.



View south along Bedford Way to the Guildhall

## Charles Cross (10)

While Charles Church, at the north-east end of Exeter Street, is still not as integral to the layout of the city centre as it could be, except for traffic coming from the north and east, the view from St Andrews Cross down Exeter Street retains the striking set piece of the shell of the iconic Charles Church, burnt out in the Blitz but retained as the centrepiece of the roundabout at the bottom of Eastern Approach.



View along Exeter Street to Charles Church





### Notte Street (11)

Glimpses between buildings into the Conservation Area from Notte Street frame key buildings, northwards up Princess Street Ope, Finewell Street, and between Midland House and the Unitarian Church.



View along Princess Street Ope to the Combined Courts and Guildhall Tower

### Princess Street (12)

Looking east along Princess Street, the Baptist Church forms the street's terminus framed by the Combined Courts and the former Barclays Bank.



View east along Princess Street



## Palace Street (13)

From Palace Street, within the Barbican Conservation Area, there is a striking glimpse westward of the spire of the Baptist Church.

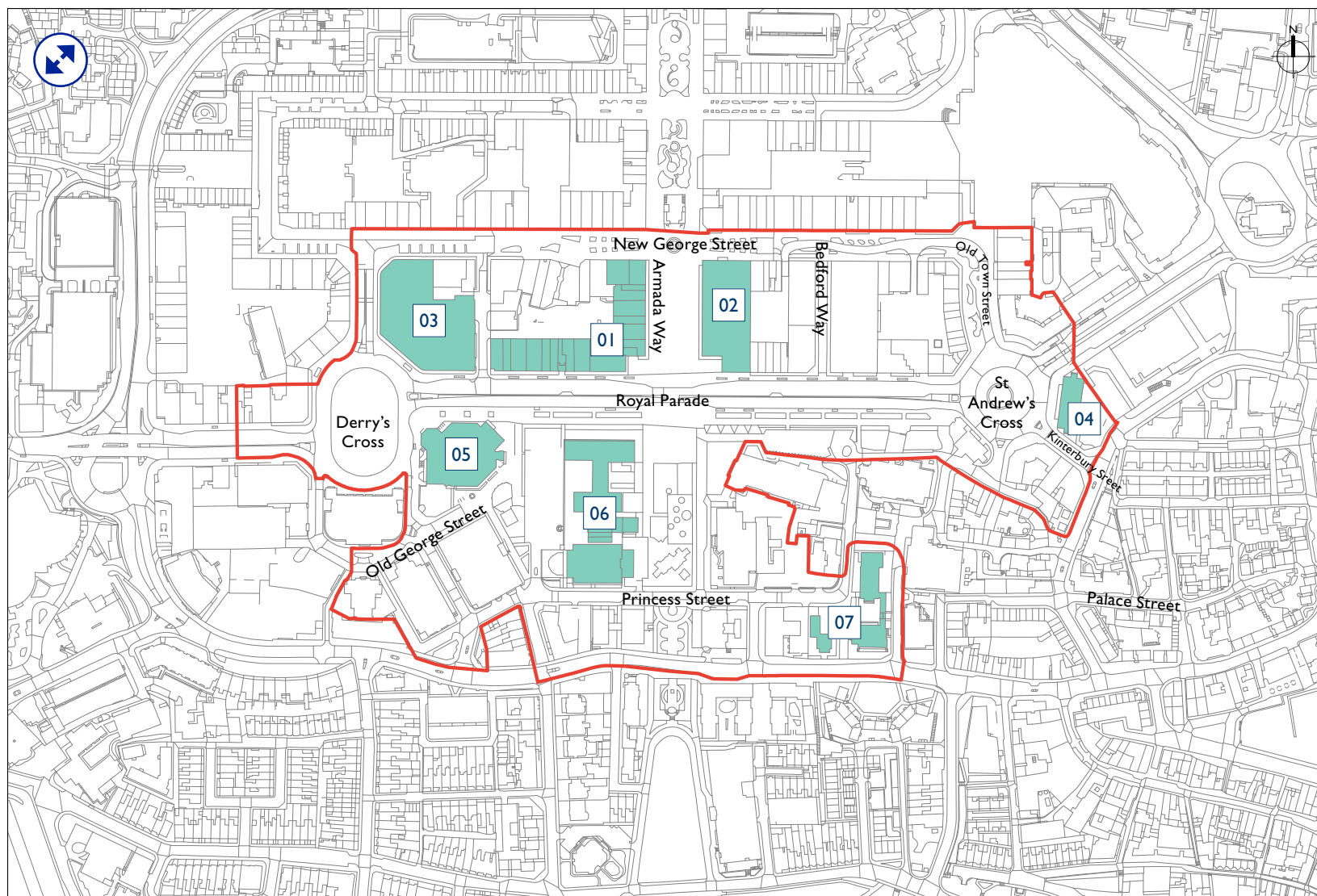


View west along Palace Street to the Baptist Church spire

## 6.3 LANDMARK BUILDINGS

The monumentality of many of the buildings within the Conservation Area and the negotiation of the Plan for Plymouth around a few pre-war survivals, means that, whether or not buildings have been statutorily listed, there are few buildings within the Conservation Area that cannot be said to, in some way, measure as 'landmark buildings'. Therefore the following selection of landmark buildings focusses on those that have the greatest landmark quality, chiefly those commercial buildings that occupy strategic anchor points and have specific features which enable them to stand out amongst the general townscape. It should be noted that the pre-war centrepieces of the Guildhall and St Andrew's Church fall within the Barbican Conservation Area and are therefore not included in this section, however both buildings are significant landmarks and contribute to the setting of the Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area. The landmarks identified in the following paragraphs are shown on [Plan 8](#).





- Conservation Area Boundary
- Landmark Buildings

- 01 Pearl Assurance
- 02 Dingles
- 03 The Cooperative Building
- 04 National Provincial
- 05 Theatre Royal
- 06 Civic Centre and Council House
- 07 Baptist and Unitarian Churches

*This plan is not to scale*

*Click on the number on the plan to be taken to the relevant building page*

**Plan 8:** Landmark buildings in the Conservation Area

## Dingles and Pearl Assurance (01 and 02)

Dingles (Thomas Tait, Sir John Burnett Tait & Partners, 1949 to 1951), now House of Fraser, is perhaps the best known and most recognised of the commercial buildings, and most expressive of the Plan as it was initially conceived and executed. Read in conjunction with the Pearl Assurance building (Alec F French and Partners with Tait, 1950 to 1952) opposite, the two set the tone for the rest of the north frontage of Royal Parade. They set the palette for the early phase of building, brought thematic elements, such as the squat towers and canopies, that were used across the scheme, and are perhaps the most impressive of the Beaux-Arts scheme.

Faced in Portland stone, both follow classical principles, although with a thoroughly modern flavour. The incised windows of Dingles within projecting frames with recessed panels of Ham stone. To the Royal Parade elevation, these are carved with floral motifs. The tower, set into the right angle of the front and side returns to Royal Parade and Armada Way has windows recessed into flat vertical pilasters mirroring the Pearl Assurance opposite. There, windows are more classically presented, recessed between reeded flat pilasters, except for one elevation to Royal Parade that replicates the incised windows of Dingles.

In keeping with Abercrombie's suggestions for height, Dingles was built initially to three-storeys with a taller tower. A further storey was added in 1960 and another in 1975. Following a fire in 1988, both were rebuilt. Pearl Assurance was built to four-storeys, with a terraced roof storey added later. While some elements of these terraces may not entirely accord with the proportions or materials of the original schemes, roof terraces across the city centre,

both original and later, are now an integral part of its character, highlighting the capacity of the monumentality of the blocks to contribute more than just commercial space.

The return of both buildings to Armada Way take the whole block, with returns to New George Street that are marginally toned down versions of their more emphatic frontages. New George Street gives access to service yards for both blocks. While these are definitely 'backstage', the rear elevation of Dingles' Armada Way block maintains full height glass block windows onto a stairwell, and smooth faced white brick, retaining the order and architectural motifs of the front.



The former Dingles department store



Pearl Assurance House



The delicate carved floral panels of Dingles elevation separating the recessed windows with projecting framing.





### The Cooperative Building (03)

Taking the whole block bounded by Royal Parade, Raleigh Street, Courtenay Street, and New George Street, the Cooperative building (WJ Reed, staff architect to The Cooperative Wholesale Society, 1950 to 1952) has a long, continuous rows of windows separated by Portland stone bands and pilasters, flanked by glass blocks that gave it a luminous glow that was less formal and more playful. Its terrace above had a bright yellow soffit, and photographs from its early years show bright red paint on its columns.



*The Cooperative Building*



## National Provincial Bank (04)

Opposite the terminus of Royal Parade, the National Provincial Bank (BC Sherren, staff architect to the bank, 1955 to 1958) is of a stripped classical design with vast treble height portico with plain pillars enclosing the blue mosaic-glass tiled façade. Within the blue, gold tiles pick out city motifs including heraldic symbols, ships, and squirrels: joyful craftsmanship within such austere external treatment. A copper mansard roof is topped by a short, blue Italian glass lantern clock tower which marks the axis of Royal Parade, and is in line with the tower of the Gas Board building at the opposite end of Royal Parade.



*The former National Provincial Bank*





### Theatre Royal (05)

Although a relative newcomer to the city centre, the Theatre Royal (Peter Moro Partnership, 1978 to 1982) is a striking addition of substance to the south-west of Royal Parade. Its mass and materials of bronze and blockwork compliment the older buildings of the Plan. Its night-time illumination recalls the heyday of the department stores and bank lobbies on the north side of Royal Parade. From Derry's Cross, the Theatre Royal can be seen to frame the Civic Centre beyond, while its bronze-work is now complimented by both the 7m statue 'Messenger' beside it, and the extension to the Bank public house behind.



Theatre Royal

## Civic Centre and Council House (06)

The Civic Centre (HJW Stirling with Jellicoe, Ballantyne and Coleridge, 1958 to 1962) is of course the most striking landmark of the city centre. Its height alone sets it apart from the other buildings. Inspired more by Skidmore Owings Merrill than Abercrombie's Beaux-Arts, the precast concrete building comprises a 13-storey tower that straddles a two-storey plinth block to the north and a bridge link to the two-storey Council House to the south. Between the Civic Centre and Council House is an open courtyard with a reflective pool that was part of the landscape design of the Civic Square. The link block is raised on pilotis clad in red Murano glass and the same columns partly support the Council House's first floor. The material palette also include exposed Plymouth limestone, concrete aggregate panels and green granite panels that are decorated in Fibonacci sequence designs that were intended to reflect the diversity of civic undertakings that the building would contain. The butterfly roof is perhaps the most recognisable motif of the Civic Centre, and Plymouth's skyline. A roof terrace and restaurant were initially open to the public but closed in the 1970s. While the Council House remains in its intended use and its interior furnishings and fittings are in good order, the tower will be converted to residential use by Urban Splash in the near future.

Although the relatively good survival of the buildings speaks to the quality of the materials used in construction, there has inevitably been some deterioration of materials over time, including the loss of patches of the distinctive red Murano glass of the Council House's pilotis, exposing the base beneath. The Council House's steel appointments have also suffered over time and attention is due to the window frames and railings.



*The Civic Centre and Council House*



## Baptist and Unitarian Churches (07)

Louis de Soissons' Baptist (1957 to 1959) and Unitarian (1957 to 1958) churches, to Catherine Street and Notte Street respectively, are fitting cornerstones to the south-east of the Conservation Area. With wide-overhanging pitched roofs, topped by bright timber lantern-belvederes and copper spires, the buildings express a lightness and spirituality augmented by the open landscaping in which they are set. The New England references (their scale, pitched-gabled roofs, use of timber, lanterns, short-spires) evoke the lightness of protestant church-building in the New England settlements, with which Plymouth has a strong connection. The Baptist Church's cloister-courtyard and arcades speak to a contemplative tradition, and the peace intended in the creation of the religious precinct.

The churches also manage to be closely and harmoniously embedded with the synagogue and Anglican minster church of St Andrew's to the north, and to the Modernist, red brick Catholic church across Notte Street to the south-east. Between later precast concrete office blocks to their east and west, the airy aspect of the two churches evokes the old town and its famous harbour a short distance to the south-west.



Plymouth Unitarian Church



Catherine Street Baptist Church



## 7.0: AUDIT OF HERITAGE ASSETS

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset; however, the individual buildings within it are also of significance, some being designated heritage assets in their own right, and contribute to the character and special interest of the Conservation Area. The level of significance of buildings varies from those which are statutorily listed to those which are of no heritage value, all falling within the following categories:

- Listed Buildings
- Non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs)
- Positive contributors
- Other buildings

These categories are described over the following paragraphs and **Plan 9** shows the category of each building in the Conservation Area.

The judgement of these categories of significance is determined by an understanding of the buildings in the context of the Conservation Area's special interest and their relevance to the Plan for Plymouth and its execution. This understanding is measured against principles set out in best practice guidance and policy, specifically Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (2008) and the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

The following judgments are based on existing knowledge. It is not intended to provide a fully comprehensive and detailed assessment of each building individually. It should not be assumed that the omission of any information is intended as an indication that a building is not important. A detailed assessment of significance specific to a building or site within the Conservation Area should always be carried out prior to proposing any change.



Plan 9: Categories of heritage asset within the Conservation Area

### QUICK FACTS

- Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset of national importance.
- The Conservation Area contains buildings which have different levels of significance ranging from being statutorily listed, being non-designated heritage assets, being positive contributors, to being of low or no heritage value.
- The Conservation Area contains eight Listed Buildings, all Grade II and include the Civic Centre and the Theatre Royal.
- Non-designated heritage assets include the Reel Cinema, the Pearl Assurance Building and former Dingles Department Store, which flank the junction of Armada Way with Royal Parade.
- Positive contributors include Norwich Union House and the Lloyds Bank Building whilst buildings which are of low or no heritage value include the Theatre Royal Car Park.







## 7.2 LISTED BUILDINGS

There are eight buildings in the Conservation Area that are statutorily listed, demonstrating their individual historic or architectural interest: they are outstanding examples of their kind and are essential in defining the character and significance of the Conservation Area as a whole; both as integral parts of the Plan for Plymouth and as examples of their kind. These include the Civic Centre, the Theatre Royal and the Baptist and Unitarian Churches.

Listed buildings are of national importance and are protected under the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act* 1990. The criteria for listing is defined by the Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and listing ranges from Grade I (the highest level of protection) through to Grade II\* and II (the most common level). Grade I and II\* listed buildings together comprise around seven per cent of listed buildings nationally, with the remainder being Grade II. All eight listed buildings in the Conservation Area are listed at Grade II and there are numerous other listed buildings within its close setting.

Alterations, additions or demolitions to listed buildings requires Listed Building Consent, which allows local planning authorities to make decisions that have been informed by an understanding of the building or the site's significance. There should be an assumption that listed buildings should be protected from harm or inappropriate change in any development planning and, should in fact, benefit from any such activity through maintenance and improvement of the asset itself, or its setting.

The table adjacent contains the listed buildings in the Conservation Area with relevant details such as list number and address. The statutory list entries can be found on the National Heritage List for England (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>).

NAME	STATUTORY ADDRESS	LIST ENTRY NUMBER
Council House and former Civic Centre	Council House and former Civic Centre, Armada Way, Plymouth, PL1 2AA	1392038
Theatre Royal Plymouth	Royal Parade, Plymouth, PL1 2TR	1457337
Clock Tower	Clock Tower, Derry's Cross	1130056
The Bank Public House	The Bank Public House, Derry's Cross	1130057
Former Barclays Bank Building	Former Barclays Bank Building, Armada Way	1390618
Unitarian Church	Unitarian Church, Notte Street	1392837
Baptist Church	Baptist Church, Catherine Street	1393060
Royal Bank of Scotland	Royal Bank of Scotland, St Andrew's Cross, Plymouth	1393429

### REGISTERED PARK AND GARDENS

The Civic Square is designated as a registered park and garden of special historic interest. Whilst not a statutory designation, registered parks are of national significance which is given material consideration in the planning decisions. Open spaces, including the Civic Square are considered in **Section 5.4**.



### 7.3 NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Buildings which do not meet the criteria for statutory listing but are still of high significance in their own right as well as contributing to the Conservation Area are defined as non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs). NDHAs are of local importance and significance and as such are protected through local planning policies within the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034*.

Buildings may be identified as NDHAs for different reasons including: their historical value; their aesthetic or architectural value; their landmark nature; their use; their communal or social value; or because they are locally distinctive.

They are more able to accommodate sensitive change than statutorily listed buildings and indeed some of the NDHAs identified are subject to site allocations within the JLP. Conversion and alteration of these buildings has the potential to enhance their significance as well as bringing new uses and vibrancy to the Conservation Area.

The Reel Cinema, the Pearl Assurance Building, the former Dingles department store and the Combined Courts are examples of NDHAs within the Conservation Area. The table adjacent lists the NDHAs in the Conservation Area along with the reasons why they are in this category.

NAME	REASON FOR INCLUSION
<b>The Reel Cinema</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of Plymouth's 1930s super cinemas.</li> <li>Designed to a high standard in an Art Deco style by William R Glen.</li> <li>Renamed the 'ABC' in 1958, it was also a live music venue that the Beatles performed at twice.</li> <li>Many internal decorative features still survive.</li> </ul>
<b>House of Fraser (former Dingles Department Store)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the original buildings to be conceived and constructed within the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Designed by Thomas Tait, well known modernist architect and a consultant on the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Landmark status framing the entrance to Armada Way from Royal Parade with Pearl Assurance opposite.</li> <li>Portland stone materiality and features such as canopies exemplify the early phase of the Plan.</li> </ul>





NAME	REASON FOR INCLUSION	NAME	REASON FOR INCLUSION
<b>Pearl Assurance Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the original buildings to be conceived and constructed within the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Designed by Alec F French with Thomas Tait, well known modernist architect and a consultant on the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Landmark status framing the entrance to Armada Way from Royal Parade with the former Dingles Department Store opposite.</li> <li>Portland stone materiality and features such as canopies exemplify the early phase of the Plan.</li> </ul>	<b>The Atheneum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A replacement of the pre-war Athenaeum, founded in the 18th century for the study and promotion of learning in science, technology, literature and art.</li> <li>Important community asset and centrepiece of the Plan for Plymouth's entertainment quarter.</li> <li>Architectural style inspired by the Festival of Britain with piloti and box frame.</li> </ul>
<b>The Cooperative Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the original buildings to be conceived and constructed within the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Important position on Royal Parade, with elevation extending the full urban block giving it landmark status.</li> <li>Portland stone materiality and features such as canopies exemplify the early phase of the Plan.</li> <li>Designed by WJ Reed, staff architect to The Cooperative Wholesale Society.</li> </ul>	<b>Plymouth Combined Court</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the Civic phase of construction with the Civic Centre, Council House and Civic Square.</li> <li>Designed by HJW Stirling with Jellicoe Ballantyne and Coleridge, who also collaborated in the Civic Centre opposite.</li> <li>Local slate cladding and dal de verre glazing elevate the aesthetic value of the building.</li> <li>Important civic use.</li> </ul>
		<b>Royal Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One of the original buildings to be conceived and constructed within the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Designed by Alec F French with Thomas Tait, well known modernist architect and a consultant on the Plan for Plymouth.</li> <li>Portland stone materiality but more traditionally classical in style than other early buildings demonstrating the flexibility within the Plan for architects to express different styles whilst maintaining the overall vision.</li> </ul>



#### 7.4 POSITIVE CONTRIBUTORS

Buildings which are not of national or local significance but still make an important contribution to the overall character and appearance of the Conservation Area are identified as positive contributors. These buildings still possess some heritage value in their own right but, primarily, it is in their contribution to the understanding and appreciation of the Conservation Area that their value lies. Therefore, the preservation and enhancement of these buildings is important in preserving and enhancing the Conservation Area as a whole and is encouraged, however, there are likely to be opportunities for sensitive change to these buildings with some subject to site allocations within the JLP.

Buildings in the category are shown on [Plan 9](#) and include Norwich Union House, the Post Office Building and most buildings lining the south side of New George Street.

#### 7.5 OTHER BUILDINGS

Other buildings in the Conservation Area are either of low or no heritage value. They are not of particular importance in determining the character of an area but are unlikely to detract from it. There is likely to be only a limited heritage argument for the retention of such assets, but neither is there likely to be any particular heritage imperative for their removal. There are likely to be opportunities to enhance buildings in this category, either through their alteration or their sensitive replacement. Buildings in the category are shown on [Plan 9](#) and include the Theatre Royal Car Park.





## PART C: MANAGING CHANGE IN PLYMOUTH CITY CENTRE

This part of the CAAMP provides an analysis of the current issues and opportunities facing the Conservation Area. It then provides an overarching vision for the Conservation Area, a set of aspirations to enhance the Conservation Area and guidance and advice on how to manage change.

8.0 Issues and Opportunities	65
9.0 Management Plan	73





Plymouth's city centre faces challenges over the coming years with regards to changes in retail and office demand, climate change and ensuring its important Post-War heritage does not further decline. However, out of these challenges arise exciting opportunities to move the city forward in a way which celebrates the heritage of the city and places it at the heart of its regeneration. The following seven, inter-related themes explore the issues and opportunities facing the Conservation Area.

*Click on a theme to be taken to the relevant page*



### QUICK FACTS

- Out of the many challenges facing the city centre arise opportunities for enhancing and raising awareness of the Post-War heritage.
- These opportunities relate to enhancing streets and spaces, new uses for buildings, diversifying activity, responding to climate change, celebrating Plymouth's heritage and increasing the capacity of the community to care for the city.







## THEME 1: SPACES AND STREETS

The Plan for Plymouth placed considerable emphasis on quality public spaces that were to be enjoyed by all the city's citizens. Over time, there has been change to these spaces including the full pedestrianisation of Armada Way, which

has been beneficial, and the addition of a vehicular route in the Civic Square, which has not. There has also been a considerable increase in vehicular movement, particularly private car use, which has resulted in increases in signage and infrastructure and conflicts between people movement and vehicle movement.

There has generally been an increase in the amount of street furniture within the public realm, the replacement of original pieces of furniture and the introduction of insensitive and varied styles of furniture. In particular, the large litter bins and the considerable variety and style of public seating are detracting. Coupled with this there has been incremental replacement of surface treatments, although some original finishes do survive. Replacement surface treatments are of mixed quality, some in need of maintenance, and there is inconsistency in style and materials across the Conservation Area, even within the same street in some instances; this detracts from the overall appearance of the area.

Trees and green landscaping have always been a part of the city centre's public realm. However, the shrubs in the Civic Square have grown considerably since they were planted more than half a century ago and these now frequently obscure important views north and south from the square. This is similarly the case towards the north end of Armada Way (outside the Conservation Area boundary) where trees screen views down Armada Way into the Conservation Area and beyond.

### THE OPPORTUNITIES

- Consider options to reduce the impact of cars, visible surface car parking and rationalise other vehicle movement across the Conservation Area, to improve air quality, reduce carbon and improve pedestrian experience within the Conservation Area.
- Consider options for improving permeability over Royal Parade, for example through design improvements to existing crossing points and review of the use of barriers and railings.
- Consider the need for additional management of existing trees and landscaping to help enhance linear views along Armada Way.
- Introducing more green landscaping to the public realm of the Conservation Area could be beneficial if this takes into consideration the special interest of the Conservation Area.
- Consider opportunities for increasing biodiversity, this could include living walls, bee pollinating plants, wildflower mixes, bird/bat boxes, bee bricks or hives.
- Improve and replace street furniture in the Conservation Area to remove visual and physical clutter from the street and public spaces including Old Town Street and Royal Parade.
- Improve and replace street furniture including provision for modified seating design to protect users from inclement weather.
- Replacement of poor quality, non-original items of street furniture with high-quality, sensitively-designed alternatives. The appearance should be sympathetic to the Post-War character of the Conservation Area.
- Surface treatments are important in holding the public spaces together and contribute to their character, reintroducing historically-appropriate surface treatments where these have been replaced would be beneficial. In particular the south side of Royal Parade and New George Street.
- Consider greening and enhancing routes and links to the University, Railway Station, Sutton Harbour and the Hoe.
- Consider amending the list entry for Civic Square to update changes which have taken place in recent years including removal of the subway and changing to surface treatments.

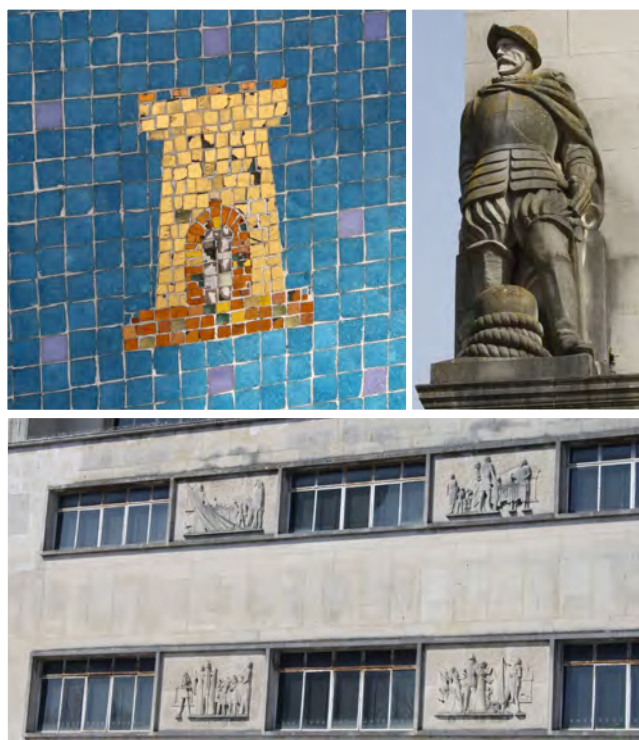




The buildings of the Conservation Area are of vital importance to its special interest. They form the backdrop to the public realm, assist with wayfinding and are the setting of both civic and commercial activities. Most of the buildings in the Conservation Area date to the 1950s and 1960s as there has been very little replacement since the Plan for Plymouth was instigated. Several buildings are statutorily listed, and most others make a strong, positive contribution to the special interest of the area. However, lack of adequate maintenance over the decades, lack of appreciation of buildings of this period and changes in use patterns of urban centres (exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic) have led to a decline in the appearance and fabric of the building stock.

The Portland stone, and other masonry, façades of buildings need cleaning and repair where features have been lost or are damaged. Shop fronts have been altered and their signage replaced with unsympathetic modern designs that detract from the experience of the Post-War character of the area. Unsympathetic modern additions to buildings both small scale, such as pigeon deterrents, and larger scale, such as roof extensions also detract from their appearance in some cases. This is not to say that any extension or addition to buildings would be detracting.

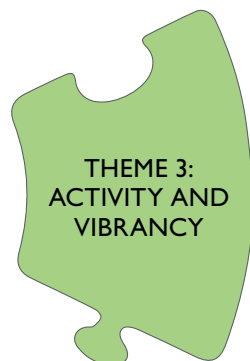
The Conservation Area contains buildings of large floor area, built to house commercial headquarters, banks and department stores. These uses in such large buildings are in decline and there are now several vacant buildings in the Conservation Area, and likely to be more in the coming years. Reuse of this type of building is challenge facing many urban centres across the country but is a particular problem in Plymouth where there is a high proportion of this building type.



### THE OPPORTUNITIES

- Façade cleaning, other necessary maintenance and the repair of architectural features and applied art would be very beneficial at enhancing the appearance of the Conservation Area. This includes cleaning of the Portland stone, repairs to mosaic finishes and overhauling and repainting metal windows and guard railings.
- The gradual reinstatement of more historically appropriate shop fronts and signage.
- Removal or sympathetic replacement of detracting features would be beneficial where opportunities arise.
- There are opportunities to install roof extensions and replace existing roof extensions, as identified in the JLP site allocations. Any addition or extension to building should be of high quality design and enhance the character of the Conservation Area.
- Although challenging, it is necessary to secure new uses for the vacant buildings in the Conservation Area. There are exciting opportunities for the reuse of these buildings both in the short-term and long-term.
- A redevelopment plan for the Civic Centre is already in place, however the adjacent car park site is an opportunity for new development. It is important that the special interest of the Conservation Area and the adjacent Grade II\* listed building are taken into careful consideration when planning new buildings on this site, especially ensuring the landmark status of the Civic Centre is maintained.





The Plan for Plymouth segregated the city centre into different use zones: religious; civic; business; and retail. The way we live and use our city centres has changed since the 1950s and so there is a need to adapt and be flexible with this aspect of the special interest of the Conservation Area to make the city centre a vibrant and enjoyable place to be. Many of the uses prevalent in the 1950s are in decline, retail and office in particular, leading to underuse of buildings and vacancy. Although there is still plenty of daytime activity, the Conservation Area is virtually uninhabited and underused in the evenings. The Conservation Area contains large public spaces and generous streets, such as Armada Way, however these are also underused in terms of contributing to the vibrancy and activity of the area.

### THE OPPORTUNITIES

- Bringing new uses into the Conservation Area would be of considerable benefit to bringing vibrancy and increasing activity throughout the day to the city centre.
- Establishing a mix of uses within the area, rather than segregated zones, will be important as will finding new uses for vacant and underused buildings. It will be particularly important to ensure active frontages are maintained and encouraged at ground floor.
- Bringing residential use with the possibility of rooftop gardens' to the city centre will increase activity outside of office and retail hours and establish a community within the Conservation Area.
- Building on the emerging café culture in the city centre by encouraging the partial use of the public realm for outdoor seating for restaurants and cafés, will bring activity to the street scene and can be easily accommodated due to broad street widths. Care needs to be taken to ensure that associated seating is of high quality and does not create unnecessary clutter.
- Using the generous public spaces for food markets, Christmas markets, live performances, film screenings and other events will bring new vibrancy to the city and extend the use of these spaces into the evenings.
- Encourage the continued presence of street performers and other leisure users which bring cultural variety to the area.
- Encouraging the establishment of a nighttime economy in the area building on the recent Purple Flag accreditation. This could include uses such as bars, restaurants and nightclubs as this will extend the activity in the Conservation Area into the evening.





#### THE OPPORTUNITIES

- Reducing the impact of private cars within the Conservation Area by considering reducing speed limits or other appropriate measures. This could reduce pollution and carbon emissions and enhance the experience of the Conservation Area for pedestrians.
- Installation of electric vehicle charging points in suitable locations should be considered alongside other transport and vehicle proposals including options for electric bus shuttles to various points in the city.
- Encouraging active travel in the Conservation Area, and wider city, including: cycling; walking; scooters; and other appropriate means. Changes to the public realm to accommodate this, such as: cycle lanes; cycle stands; and parking zones for scooters, must be incorporated sensitively and with the special interest of the Conservation Area taken into consideration.
- Additions and alterations to buildings to reduce their energy consumption, such as green roofs, solar panels or biosolar roofs. The benefit of changes at roof level being that there will be virtually no visible change from within the public realm.
- New green landscaping to absorb carbon dioxide and rainwater; the latter assisting in reducing flood risk. Sustainable drainage solutions could also be considered where these can be implemented sensitively.
- Aligning with the objectives within the 'Plymouth Climate Emergency Action Plan 2019'.

Plymouth City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 with climate change one of the most important issues facing the world over the coming years. As with historic cities of other periods, the sensitive adaptation of the Post-War city centre, to deal with climate change and contribute to reducing carbon consumption, will be a significant challenge.

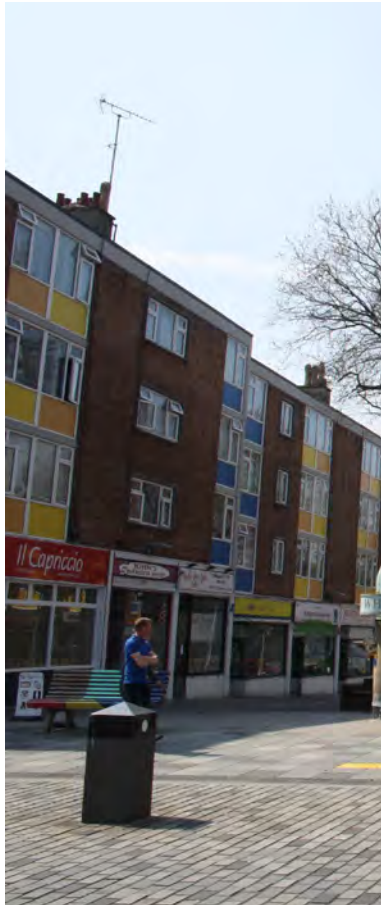






### THEME 5: SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

The Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area is by its nature embedded within the urban fabric of Plymouth. Change will take place within its setting that has the potential to be harmful to its special interest. Trends are towards taller building types which are therefore more visible but even smaller buildings or alterations to existing buildings, if poorly designed, could be detrimental. The immediate setting of the Conservation Area to the north, which forms the rest of the Plan for Plymouth area, is particularly vulnerable to change that may harm the Conservation Area as it is intrinsically connected to the special interest of the Conservation Area.



#### THE OPPORTUNITIES

- The significance and contribution of views from and through the Conservation Area is taken into consideration when planning and deciding on the suitability of new development or change in the setting of the Conservation Area.
- For new development in the setting of the Conservation Area to celebrate and be sensitive to the Post-War heritage of Plymouth.
- To embed the special interest of the Conservation Area and its setting into the plan-making and decision-taking processes.
- For the boundary of the Conservation Area to be reviewed in the future in line with best practice guidance from Historic England.
- Consider opportunities for increasing biodiversity, this could include living walls, bee pollinating plants, wildflower mixes, bird/bat boxes, bee bricks or hives.





Plymouth's Post-War heritage is of national significance demonstrated through the multiple listed buildings and the designation of the Conservation Area. However, there is a longstanding lack of understanding and appreciation of this heritage which has contributed to the decline in the building stock and the unsympathetic changes which have taken place. Plymothians and the public in general are beginning to appreciate the heritage of the Post-War period, however there remain many unexploited opportunities to increase and broaden this appreciation.

#### THE OPPORTUNITIES:

- There are considerable opportunities to raise awareness and improve appreciation of the Post-War heritage of Plymouth and to engage new audiences both within the city and beyond.
- Marketing Plymouth as 'the' Post-War city, in the same way that Bath is known as the Georgian city.
- Working with local artists and makers to create pieces that celebrate the Post-War heritage including prints, mugs, tea towels etc. to be sold in local shops and tourist information centres.
- Participating in an Open Doors or similar event, which opens buildings in the city to the public that are not normally accessible.
- Continuing tours and talks relating to the Post-War heritage including considering a 'terraces' tour.
- Re-instilling the inherent social value of the Plan for Plymouth as a city for the people with spaces and buildings accessible by all. This could include improving public access to the Council House and ensuring adequate public access to the top floor of the Civic Centre following its refurbishment. Continued public habitation and enjoyment of the Civic Square and other public spaces is also important and encouraging the occupation of underused spaces such as the alleys and yards.
- Considering temporary art installations and performance art inspired by the Post-War heritage of the city, this could be in connection with encouraging the use of the alleys and yards.
- Consider updating and expanding the network of interpretation boards within the Conservation Area and looking at digital means of interpretation including QR codes set in the ground or on plaques, audio-visual guides and self-guided tours.







## THEME 7: COLLABORATION AND RESEARCH

The relatively recent nature of the Post-War period means that there remains much to be understood about its significance and how to care for it. This is the case for Plymouth where there is insufficient capacity and experience locally to advocate for the Post-War heritage of the city. This is leading to uninformed changes both to buildings, spaces and the setting of the Conservation Area and is likely to continue as regeneration of the city centre takes place over the coming years.

### THE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Making connections with local stakeholders, groups and organisations such as: heritage groups; community groups; arts organisations; the Box; University of Plymouth students; and schools. The aim being to build capacity within the local community to care for, and be advocates of, the city centre heritage.
- Lots of the original material related to the Post-War development of Plymouth: film footage; minute books; etc., has not yet been studied in detail. There is an opportunity for research and evaluation of archived material to expand the understanding of why the Conservation Area is of significance. This could be undertaken in collaboration with the University of Plymouth, perhaps through PhD programmes or through the Archival Practice MA.
- Making connections with other comparative international cities, in particular those that have undergone successful regeneration such as Rotterdam, in order to learn and share knowledge.
- Consider opportunities for further city twinning, focussing on other Post-War cities such as Le Havre to share knowledge and mutual celebration of Post-War urban heritage.
- Making connections with other cities who have successfully undertaken similar types of change to their cities as Plymouth is now facing, such as Vancouver where there has been an effective transition to residential uses within the city centre.





### 9.1 VISION FOR THE CONSERVATION AREA

Plymouth city centre is a unique and special place. Nowhere in the UK is there a better surviving or more visually coherent example of the architecture, design and social spirit of the Post-War period. The planned layout of the area, its buildings, open spaces, materials palette, public art and the sense of civic pride all contribute to making the Conservation Area of special interest.

The overarching ambition for the Conservation Area is to preserve and enhance this special interest in a progressive and ambitious way that support the regeneration of the city centre. Designed as a set-piece of zoned, interlocking areas, the city centre needs to adapt to new modes of shopping, working and living and this Management Plan will provide a tool for unlocking the potential for heritage-led regeneration and proportionate new development to create a diverse and vibrant centre for residents and visitors.

Preserving and enhancing the special interest of the Conservation Area is achieved by ensuring that change and development take place in a considered and sympathetic way.

Raising awareness of the significance and history of the city centre will promote shared responsibility for looking after the Conservation Area and valuing its key attributes as important changes for the future take place.

The vision for the Conservation Area is to ensure that future change responds to the character and appearance of the area, whether that is following broad design principles arising from the modernist character and language inherent in Plymouth or responding to it in innovative new ways.

The city centre, as a place of vitality and life, was built into the architecture and open spaces from its conception, and Plymouth, as the first of the Post-War planned cities, sent powerful messages about new ways of urban life that had an impact across the country. By valuing the best of the past and showing how meaningful new use, diversification and adaption can be compatible with modern heritage, the city centre can continue to be a pioneering place.

### QUICK FACTS

- The overarching ambition for the Conservation Area is to preserve and enhance this special interest in a progressive and ambitious way that supports the regeneration of the city centre.
- National and local planning policy, including the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034* are utilised in making decisions about change within the Conservation Area.
- Permitted Development Rights are different in a Conservation Area, meaning that planning permission is needed for works which materially affect the external appearance of a building.
- The Council has identified specific projects and proposals which will enhance the Conservation Area and raise awareness of its special interest; these include improvements to buildings shop fronts and the public realm.
- All buildings and open spaces in the Conservation Area require maintenance and repair.
- Alteration, extension and new development should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area through their design and materials.
- Changes to mitigate climate change should be sympathetic to the character of the Conservation Area.
- Looking after Plymouth's Post-War heritage is the responsibility of the local community and the city's institutions as well as the Council.





## 9.2 PLANNING LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Conservation Areas are a statutory designation, therefore planning legislation, policy and guidance is utilised when considering development or other changes within the Conservation Area and its setting. This is to ensure that any proposals seek to preserve or enhance what is special about the area including the contribution made by its setting. The primary legislation governing Conservation Areas is the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*. This is the key tool for the Council to fulfil its duty to manage its Conservation Areas and ensuring that proposals for change preserve and enhance their special interest. Below this national-level legislation lies national and local planning policy which supports the legislation. The relevant national policy is contained within the *National Planning Policy Framework* and local policy within *The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034*, *Plymouth & SW Devon Supplementary Planning Document* and *The Plymouth Plan 2014-2034*. The principal local policies that are relevant are:

### Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan

**SO3: Delivering growth in Plymouth's city centre and waterfront growth area.** Establishing and reinforcing the city centre's role as a regional centre for shopping, employment, leisure, a university centre, a strategic transport hub and a sustainable community in its own right.

**PLY1: Enhancing Plymouth's strategic role.** Plymouth city centre will be seen as the primary location for major comparison goods shopping development, commercial leisure and office development within the city, in order to maintain and strengthen its status as a regional centre, as well as a strategic location for higher / further education services.

**PLY6: Improving Plymouth's city centre.** Plymouth city centre will be renewed and enhanced through a combination of major new developments, proactive management of change and support for community and trader led initiatives. This will deliver a modern, high quality, vibrant, accessible and adaptable centre that reflects its status alongside the waterfront as the showcase of Plymouth.

- Respects and celebrates the centre's mid-twentieth century built heritage, including the Beaux Arts grid of the 1943 Abercrombie Plan and the highest and good quality non-designated assets identified in the City Centre Masterplan
- Supports the delivery of a coordinated programme of investment in the public realm, and delivers structured environmental improvements, creating a safe accessible and attractive environment for the community and visitors alike, and exploring opportunities for weather protected spaces.

**DEV20: Place shaping and the quality of the built environment.** Development proposals will be required to meet good standards of design, contributing positively to both townscape and landscape, and protect and improve the quality of the built environment.

**SPT11: Conserving the historic environment.** The LPAs will pursue a proactive and solution-orientated approach for the conservation of the historic environment, ensuring that it is promoted as a key element of local character and distinctiveness, forms a strategic context for regeneration and development, and is conserved as part of the area's cultural offer.

### DEV21: Development affecting the historic environment.

Development proposals will need to sustain the local character and distinctiveness of the area and conserve or enhance its historic environment, heritage assets and their settings according to their national and local significance.

There are also site specific allocation policies, those within the Conservation Area and its close setting are covered by policies PL7 to PL15 and include the Civic Centre, the west end of New George Street and Pearl Assurance House.

Policies contained in the JLP that relate to the historic environment are amplified in the Plymouth & SW Devon Supplementary Planning Document – paras 6.43-6.86.

Proposals will be required to comply with all relevant policies in the JLP and any relevant aspects in the Plymouth & SW Devon Supplementary Planning Document and you are advised to fully consider these before submitting an application.

In addition to legislative and policy requirements there is a wealth of best practice guidance and advice available from Historic England and other heritage organisations. When changes are being considered to buildings in the Conservation Area, or perhaps where new development is proposed, it is often helpful to use the Council's Pre-Application Advice service to gain early guidance on proposals and highlight any constraints or opportunities; details can be found on the Council's website.

Links and details of all the relevant policy, guidance and advice can be found in [Further Information](#).





### 9.3 CONTROL MEASURES BROUGHT ABOUT BY CONSERVATION AREA DESIGNATION RESTRICTIONS ON PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

In order to protect and enhance the Conservation Area, any changes that take place must conserve, respect or contribute to the character and appearance which makes the Conservation Area of special interest. Permitted Development Rights, as defined by The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, are works which can be undertaken without the need to gain planning permission. Permitted Development Rights are different in a Conservation Area, meaning that planning permission is needed for works which materially affect the external appearance of a building.

This includes, but is not restricted to:

- the total, substantial or partial demolition of buildings or structures including new openings;
- works to trees with a diameter of 75mm or greater, measured at 1.5m from soil level;
- changes to the external finish of a building;
- extension of buildings;
- installation of aerials, satellite dishes or solar panels visible from the street;
- installation advertisements and other commercial signage (Advertising Consent may also be required); and
- changing the use of a building (for example, from commercial to residential).

For further information and advice about when planning permission is required within a Conservation Area, and current permitted development rights, see the guidance on the Government's Planning Portal or contact the Council's Planning Department. It should be noted that proposals which affect listed buildings, including changes to their setting, may also require Listed Building Consent.

#### STYLE GUIDE

The council could develop a style guide which identifies key period elements, colours and features that could contribute to any new designs within the Conservation Area.



#### 9.4 MANAGEMENT PLAN

This section sets out the City Council's aspirations and proposals for enhancing the Conservation Area in the short-, medium- and long-term. Some of the projects and plans identified in this section will be part of the current High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme whilst others are longer-term and require collaboration with others. All the aspirations have the potential to enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area either physically or through raising awareness and participation in caring for the Post-War heritage of Plymouth. The aspirations also align with the wider vision to adapt, diversify and revitalise city centre and secure positive change for the future. Funding opportunities will be sought in addition to the current HSHAZ funding from Historic England, possibilities include the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Architectural Heritage Fund and other Historic England grant schemes.



#### 1. IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS

#### 2. REUSE OF BUILDINGS

#### 3. SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENTS

#### 4. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

#### 5. INCREASE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND INTERACTION

#### 6. CREATION OF A FAITH QUARTER

#### 7. RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

*Click on a numbered arrow above to  
be taken to the relevant page*



## I. IMPROVEMENTS TO BUILDINGS

The city centre's buildings are critical to the appreciation and understanding of the special interest of the Conservation Area, but some have undergone unfortunate change and degradation over the decades. It is the Council's aspiration to reverse this decline and secure enhancements to the built assets of the Conservation Area.

### Stone cleaning

Many buildings have Portland stone façades, many with decorative carved relief panels; both façades and reliefs have become stained by pollution and age. The Council will therefore aspire to ensure stone cleaning of important façades takes place when opportunities arise. The priority is buildings along Royal Parade, especially the landmark buildings of Pearl Assurance House and Dingles, as these contribute most greatly to the character of the area, and this is where cleaning will bring the most benefit. However other buildings, for example along New George Street and around St Andrew's Cross, will also benefit from stone cleaning.

The Council will work with building owners both as part of the HSHAZ programme and beyond to achieve this aspiration, aiming to secure façade cleaning by condition as part of planning applications where this is viable.

### Architectural features

Similarly, there has been deterioration of canopies and upper-level windows within some buildings with the Council aspiring to ensure these important features are restored to their former glory. Securing the repair of specific features such as the mosaic tiles to the Council House and National Provincial Bank is also a priority. Furthermore, the Council will strive to see inappropriate modern features, such as advertising films to windows, signage and pigeon deterrents removed as opportunities to secure this come forward.

Principally these enhancements are proposed to buildings in Royal Parade as part of projects within the HSHAZ programme but is anticipated that these will be secured more widely across the Conservation Area over time.





## 2. REUSE OF BUILDINGS

Considerable parts of the City Centre Conservation Area are characterised by large retail and office buildings, however, there has been and continues to be a decline in the demand for such large office and retail floor space. Some buildings are already vacant and there are others which are likely to suffer vacancy in the future. The Council sees the opportunities associated with reusing these buildings for different and mixed purposes, bringing new vibrancy and revitalisation to the city centre. Diversification of use is critical to ensuring the regeneration of the city centre which will in turn allow for investment in the public realm and other initiatives. The Council is therefore committed to working with building owners and developers to secure viable new uses for buildings where these opportunities arise.

Some sub-division of vacant buildings is likely to be necessary, particularly at ground floor to allow for smaller retail units, restaurants and cafés. Residential conversion will also be a beneficial option to consider as this will bring activity to the city centre outside of normal office and retail hours. Extension will also be necessary to meet the intensification strategy for the city centre as set out within the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034*, this will specifically be the case for those buildings subject to site allocations but will also be considered more generally across the Conservation Area.

Each building is different and what is possible in one building may not be for another. The significance of buildings will be an important consideration when planning changes to buildings in the Conservation Area. Post-war buildings have different methods of construction, materials and significances to traditional buildings, and it will be important to gain advice from architects and other practitioners who specialise in alteration and conservation of Post-War buildings. It is external changes which have the greatest potential to impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and will need to be considered most carefully within design proposals.

In the short-term, the Council will proactively seek opportunities to secure 'meanwhile' uses for vacant buildings and retail units. This will bring immediate activity to the city centre and pave the way for more permanent changes of use. Examples of meanwhile uses that will be considered are:

- community spaces
- temporary art exhibitions
- immersive theatre performances
- a climate hub providing education and workshops on sustainable living
- affordable space for local small businesses
- pop-up shops and markets



New uses will be found for former department stores such as Debenhams



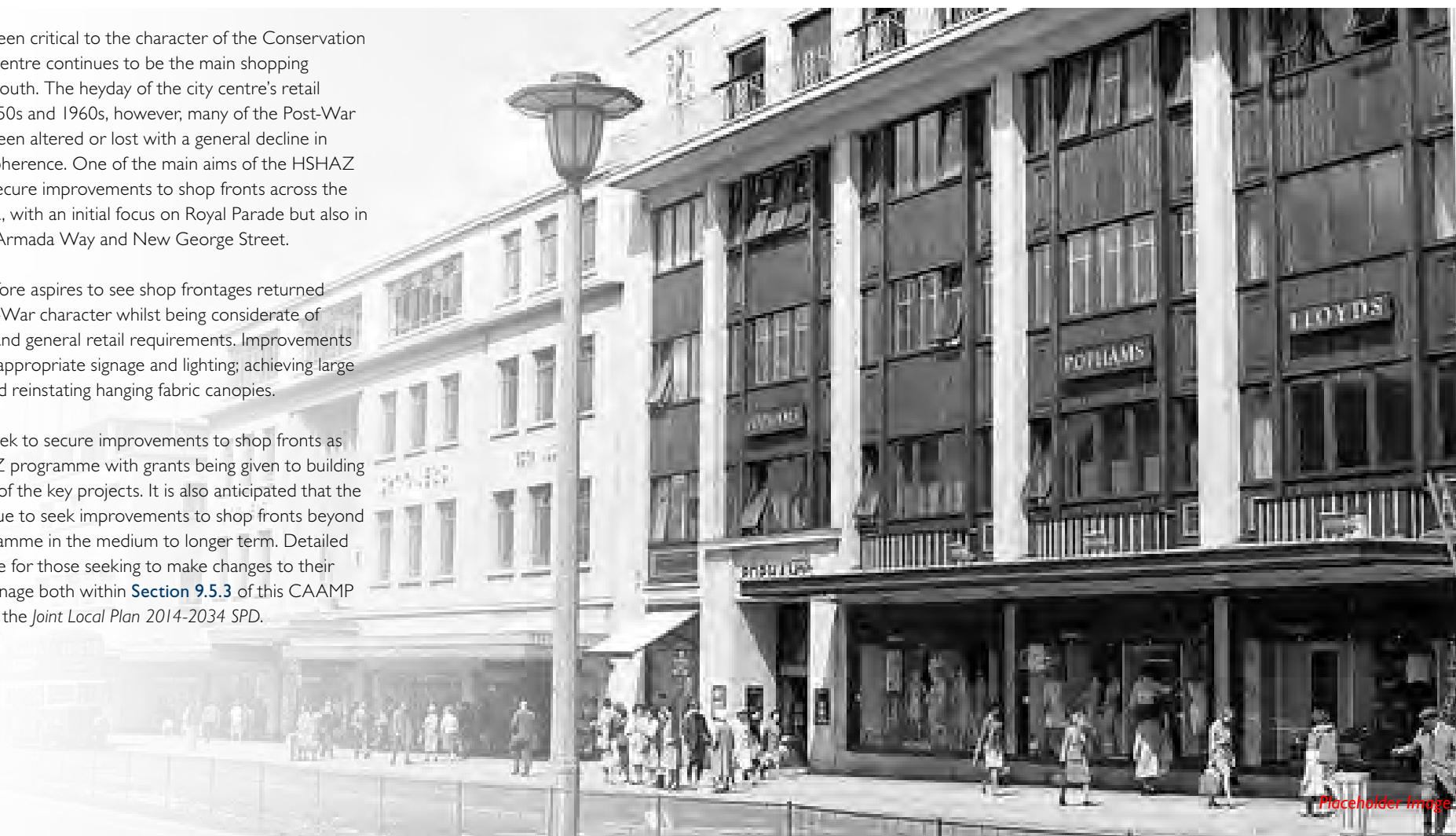
Adapt and Diversify: The former Cooperative Building has been converted from a department store into a mix of hotel and student housing with retail use retained at ground floor

### 3. SHOP FRONT IMPROVEMENTS

Retail has always been critical to the character of the Conservation Area and the city centre continues to be the main shopping destination in Plymouth. The heyday of the city centre's retail offer was in the 1950s and 1960s, however, many of the Post-War shop fronts have been altered or lost with a general decline in their quality and coherence. One of the main aims of the HSHAZ programme is to secure improvements to shop fronts across the Conservation Area, with an initial focus on Royal Parade but also in Old Town Street, Armada Way and New George Street.

The Council therefore aspires to see shop frontages returned towards their Post-War character whilst being considerate of modern branding and general retail requirements. Improvements proposed include: appropriate signage and lighting; achieving large areas of glazing; and reinstating hanging fabric canopies.

The Council will seek to secure improvements to shop fronts as part of the HSHAZ programme with grants being given to building owners being one of the key projects. It is also anticipated that the Council will continue to seek improvements to shop fronts beyond the HSHAZ programme in the medium to longer term. Detailed guidance is available for those seeking to make changes to their shop fronts and signage both within [Section 9.5.3](#) of this CAAMP and Appendix 3 of the *Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 SPD*.





## 4. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

The streets and open spaces in the Conservation Area contribute greatly to its character and the reasons why the area is of special interest. Changes have been incrementally undertaken which sometimes detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area. Enhancement of the public realm and public open spaces in the Conservation Area is therefore a key aspiration for the Council and form principal projects within the HSHAZ programme. In general, proposals to the public realm include:

- replacement of poor-quality surface finishes with sympathetic, high quality and durable surface treatments;
- reduce street clutter including that related to transport infrastructure and excess street furniture;
- rationalise signage and wayfinding and ensuring a coherent approach to new signage that takes inspiration from the Post-War character of the city centre;
- replacement of insensitive or poor-quality items of street furniture, including those no longer fit for purpose, with durable, high-quality items which take inspiration from the Post-War character of the Conservation Area;
- retain and repair historic surface finishes and street furniture;
- increasing green landscaping;
- consider appropriate opportunities to restore the long vistas both within and across the Conservation Area, for example down Armada Way;
- Replacement of poor-quality surface finishes with sympathetic, high quality and durable surface treatments that meet accessibility needs and are fit for purpose for all users and leisure users;

- Require opportunities for increasing biodiversity across the conservation area and the four main streets and spaces set out below. This could include, appropriate trees, living walls, bee pollinating plants, wildflower mixes, bird/bat boxes, bee bricks or hives; and
- Ensure continuity between street furniture across the conservation area.

Specific streets and spaces within the Conservation Area have been identified for enhancement as part of the HSHAZ programme and beyond. These are prioritised in terms of their importance to the Conservation Area and its special interest.

### Civic Square

The Civic Square is the most important public space in the Conservation Area and the Council has identified through the HSHAZ programme considerable opportunities for its enhancement. The opportunity is for the Civic Square to become the Great Square once again. The project will restore and upgrade the most important heritage features of the square while reimagining it for the 21st century. The Square will be adapted and enhanced to improve its functionality, appearance and its ability to support and cultivate the public life of the city, and to support and enable the mixed-use regeneration of the Civic Centre by Urban Splash. With the Civic Centre redevelopment into conferencing, events, workspace and residential use it will repurpose and revitalise this area of the city centre, driving major new footfall, increase events use, encourage dwell time and public use of the Square and be a catalyst for wider investment in new workspace and city centre living.

### Royal Parade

Due to the importance of this route within the Conservation Area a street audit has been undertaken (see [Appendix A](#)). The main priorities for enhancing Royal Parade are:

- removing the guard rails in the centre of the road and returning a landscaped verge;
- undertake a transport and safety audit with the aim of reducing the impact of traffic and pollution and increasing permeability across the road;
- consider making the existing pedestrian crossings straight over rather than dual;
- installing consistent and high-quality surface treatments to the south side of Royal Parade;
- rationalising street furniture and installation of sensitively-designed replacements, this includes litter bins, seating and street lighting; and
- installing high quality bus shelters that provide comfort and protection from weather.

Closely associated with the enhancements to Royal Parade will be improvements to St Andrew's Cross and Derry's Cross, which form the gateways to Royal Parade. These are currently dominated by traffic with the Council's aspirations focussed on humanising these zones. One specific project is to enhance the roundabout of St Andrew's Cross, restoring the fountain and pool at its centre.



## 4. PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS (cont'd)

### Armada Way

Armada Way was designed as 'garden vista' and 'parkway', with spaces along its length defined by the building line. It has seen considerable alteration since originally laid out, now being fully pedestrianised. To ensure that this characteristic of the historic environment is maintained and enhanced, there is a need for sensitive management and design of the natural landscaping along Armada Way.

### Old Town Street and New George Street

Old Town Street and New George Street form the core of the retail zone of the Conservation Area, originally trafficked, New George Street is now largely pedestrianised with a 1980s public realm scheme, which does not meet with current biodiversity expectations and is poor quality. Old Town Street and the eastern end of New George Street suffer from the traffic issues containing a taxi rank and providing access to the service yard and car park behind Royal Parade. Across both streets there are varied and poor-quality surface treatments which combined with the planters and vehicles reduce the accessibility and coherence of the street.

The proposals to this area of public realm seek to respect the principles of the Plan for Plymouth, namely clear sight-lines, order, proportion and geometry whilst celebrating the collection of Post-War architecture and features. The project includes new surface treatments, green landscaping and street furniture as well as reducing the width of the road in Old Town Street and relocating taxi rank to create an improved pedestrian experience.





## 5. INCREASE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND INTERACTION

A new city centre focussed heritage and art trail will be created for the existing Plymouth Trails app

**Plymouth**  
Britain's Ocean City

# Plymouth Trails



Looking after Plymouth's Post-War heritage is the responsibility of the local community and the city's institutions as well as the Council. It is therefore the Council's aspiration to develop and grow public interaction with the Conservation Area and Post-War heritage of the city centre more generally.

In the short-term and in the context of the HSHAZ programme, it is necessary to continue to broaden engagement with and understanding of the Post-War heritage of the city, in particular the Conservation Area. This will not only encourage sufficient pride about what is uniquely special about the city centre but also re-instil the social value the Post-War redevelopment envisaged. Digital and physical interpretation, talks, walks, art

installations, performances and other marketing opportunities, will all assist in raising awareness as well as activating underutilised spaces within the public realm.

One specific proposal the Council will enact is to create, in partnership with organisations such as Plymouth Culture, The Box, POP, a public art and heritage trail for the Conservation Area. This will include not only recent or newly commissioned pieces of public art but also focus on the Post-War artistic and architectural features of the Conservation Area such as the planters in Civic Square, the bow-tie paving and decorative reliefs on buildings.

In the medium- to long-term, the Council's aspiration will be to harness the interest in the city centre heritage to increase capacity within the Plymouth community to assist in managing change within the Conservation Area and broaden the understanding of it. Utilising connections with institutions such as The Box and the University of Plymouth to further research and evaluation of the Post-War heritage will be considered alongside making connections and learning from other similar Post-War cities across the UK and Europe.





## 6. CREATION OF A FAITH QUARTER

On either side of Catherine Street are four active religious buildings: St Andrew's Church; Plymouth Unitarian Church; Catherine Street Baptist Church; and Plymouth Synagogue, all are statutory listed and have their own architectural character and unique congregations. The high proportion of religious buildings means that the area of Catherine Street, Finewell Street and the east end of Princess Street is a quieter and more contemplative zone within the City Centre Conservation Area, providing a welcome and unexpected respite from the bustle of Royal Parade and the shopping zones nearby. The Council have identified an opportunity to encourage collaboration between all faith groups and with Historic England to build upon the more peaceful character of this zone through the creation of a Faith Quarter.

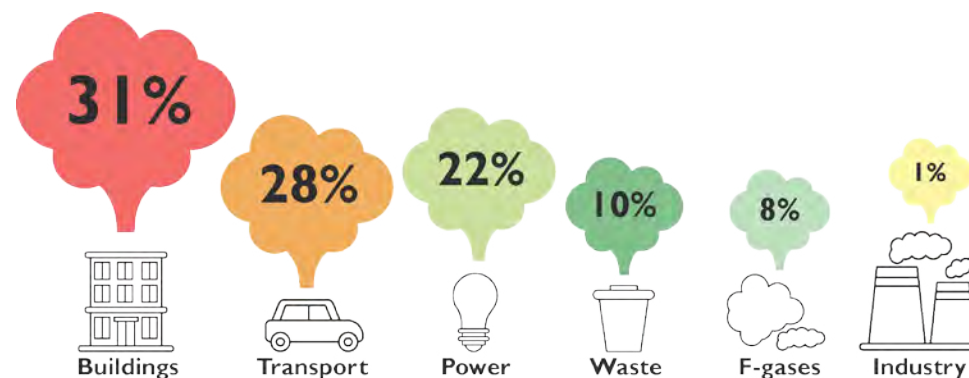


## 7. RESPONDING TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and policies to tackling climate change are embedded in all aspects of local planning policy. The Council is therefore taking a proactive approach in seeking opportunities for changes to both buildings and within the public realm.

Further greening of the city centre will be necessary to absorb carbon dioxide in the air, reduce pollution and to meet increased flood risks. For buildings this could take the form of installing green roofs or be in combination with solar panels, known as bio-solar roofs. Within the street scene, opportunities will be taken to increase the green landscaping, incorporated in a way that is sensitive to the Post-War character of the area.

More widely, opportunities to reduce vehicular pollution in the Conservation Area will be taken including a transport review of Royal Parade and finding suitable locations for electric vehicle charging points. In line with The Plymouth Plan 2014-2034 and Plymouth Climate Emergency Action Plan 2019 objectives, active travel within the city centre will be encouraged. This includes cycling and walking with changes to the public realm to ensure these options are safe and easy.



*The highest proportion of the city's carbon emissions come from buildings and transport (Source: Plymouth Climate Emergency Action Plan 2019)*





## 9.5 MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

### 9.5.1 LOOKING AFTER BUILDINGS AND SPACES

All buildings and open spaces require maintenance and repair regardless of their age, designation (or lack thereof) or significance. In Conservation Areas, it is important that such works are carried out sensitively to protect historic fabric and respect and preserve the established character of the wider area. The following management guidance is provided in the context of the policies with the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034* and its accompanying SPD. Of specific relevance are *Appendix 3 Shop fronts* and *Appendix 5 New work in conservation areas of the SPD*. In addition to the the following guidance and that within the SPD, Historic England and other heritage bodies provide a wide range of advice and guidance on how to care for and protect historic places, including Post-War heritage. See [Further Information](#) for details.

#### Maintenance

Maintenance is defined as routine work necessary to keep the fabric of a place in good order and is the responsibility of building owners and leaseholders. It differs from repair in that it is a pre-planned, regular activity intended to reduce the instances where remedial or unforeseen work is needed. Regular maintenance ensures that small problems do not escalate into larger issues, lessening the need for repairs and is therefore cost effective in the long-term. Regular inspection will help identify specific maintenance tasks relevant to each building or space. These could include:

- cleaning of stone, brick and concrete façades and other external elements such as canopies, mosaics and decorative panels and consideration to on-going maintenance;
- ensuring hanging fabric canopies are maintained in good working order and are cleaned regularly;
- cleaning of glazed elements including windows, glazed bricks and glazed elements of canopies;

- sanding down and repainting metal windows, railings and other external metalwork;
- treating any external timberwork;
- regularly clearing drainage goods of debris;
- removal of unintended vegetation growth to buildings;
- pruning of shrubs and trees to ensure they remain at an appropriate height;
- clearing mosses and other plant growth to paving and other surface treatments;
- securing loose paving; and
- maintaining street furniture appropriately through cleaning, painting, treating etc.

#### Repair

Repair is defined as work that is beyond the scope of maintenance, to remedy defects caused by decay, damage or use, including minor adaptation to achieve a sustainable outcome, but not involving alteration or restoration. Identification of repairs may arise during regular inspection or following extreme weather events. Some of the repair works required in the Conservation Area include:

- repairs to surface treatments which are damaged (cracked) which could include replacement of individual slabs;
- replacement of lost parts mosaics and repairs where the originals have been damaged;
- repair to applied artworks where definition may have been compromised; and

- overhaul of metal windows which have been damaged through rust or overpainting.

It is important to understand the cause of the damage or defect both to ensure that the repair is successful and to limit the work that is required. It is also important to understand the significance of the feature affected in order to minimise harm when enacting a repair. The following should be considered when planning repair works:

- repairs should always be considered on a case-by-case basis. A method of repair which is suitable for one building, space or feature may not be suitable for another;
- repairs should be undertaken on a like-for-like basis, if this cannot be achieved or it is not desirable to do so then permission may be required;
- use materials and construction techniques to match the existing to maintain the appearance and character of the building or space;
- repair is usually preferable over the wholesale replacement of a historic feature; and
- only undertake the minimum intervention required for any given repair.



### 9.5.2 MAKING CHANGES AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

Change has inevitably taken place since the development of the city centre in the Post-War period to meet with changing demands and expectations. Future change will also be needed to ensure that buildings continue to meet the requirements of their occupants and remain in viable use. This aligns with the Council's objectives for the city centre in terms of regeneration and diversification to create a vibrant place to live and work. The *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034* identifies specific sites where there are opportunities for change and new development (Policies PLY7 to I5).

#### Demolition

Demolition of buildings or removal of features that detract from the Conservation Area may be beneficial. Detracting features include the roof extension of Dingles and there are a small number of whole buildings that are intrusive to the character of the Conservation Area. Demolition of detracting buildings and features will only be permitted where suitable new development is proposed.

#### Alterations

Alterations should preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area. This means that changes should be respectful of the prevailing architectural and visual character of the Conservation Area and the specific character of the street or space in which it is located. Alterations should also use appropriate materials, whether these are the same as those typically found in the Conservation Area or whether they are new materials that are complementary. Enhancement could be achieved through removing a detracting feature and replacing with something more 'in keeping' or with something that draws inspiration from the character of the Conservation Area. Altering or replacing existing metal windows is unlikely to be appropriate as they are an integral part of the building within which they sit and the visual character of the street scene.

#### Extensions

Extensions should be subordinate to the existing buildings in their scale, massing and design.

Roof level extension is likely to be acceptable, even desirable, for many buildings subject to their being of appropriate design and materials. Some buildings in the Conservation Area have already undergone extension both historically and more recently. Each building is different, in some cases it will be most appropriate to set back a roof extension, similar to the terraces which exist on some buildings. In other cases, it will be appropriate for an extension to maintain the established building line. All extensions should be of high-quality design and construction. Materials and detailing should complement the existing building and the street or space within which it is located. Pastiche designs are unlikely to be appropriate with contemporary or complementary proposals being desirable.

Extensions that infill areas below projecting canopies may be appropriate in some circumstances but are unlikely to be appropriate in particular sensitive areas as this would greatly change the appearance of individual buildings, the street scene as a whole and the original aim of protecting shoppers from the elements.

#### New Development

As identified with local planning policy, there are opportunities for new development within the Conservation Area, such as on the Civic Centre car park or redevelopment of existing buildings which do not contribute to the special interest of the Conservation Area. There are also opportunities for new development within the close and wider setting of the Conservation Area.

#### Permissions Required

Planning permission will be required for all demolition, alteration or extension which affects the exterior of a building. If a building is listed, then Listed Building Consent will be required for both internal and external demolitions and alterations and for extensions. Planning permission will be required for all new development within the Conservation Area and its setting.

#### Things to Consider

The following should be considered when planning any new development or change to buildings within the Conservation Area or its setting:

- the significance of any building proposed to be removed, altered or extended;
- the scale and grain of buildings in the surrounding area including that proposed for change and its neighbours;
- the materials and architectural detailing characteristic of the existing building and/or those in the surrounding area;
- colour palette of existing or newly introduced elements;
- the relationship with the street and any open spaces;
- the potential impact on important views and landmark buildings;
- the potential impact of the new design on the setting of any neighbouring designated open spaces and non-designated heritage assets; and
- The impact of development on the setting of the Conservation Area.

This list is not exhaustive, each site will present its own unique requirements for a sensitive and appropriate new design. In all cases, development must be of the highest quality of design, construction and detailing. The principal aim of development should be to preserve or enhance the character of its setting and the Conservation Area as a whole.

### 9.5.3 SHOP FRONTS AND SIGNAGE

The ground floor retail units along Royal Parade, New George Street and others are the part of the Conservation Area most visible to pedestrians and what characterises the area for many of those using it. The loss or concealment of the 1950s and 1960s shop fronts has been detrimental to the appearance of the Conservation Area and proposals to reverse this will be encouraged. The following guidance supports and builds upon the general shop front guidance within Appendix 3 of the *Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 SPD*.

Whilst it is not intended that shop fronts will be returned exactly to their Post-War appearance, restoring the principal characteristics of shop fronts of this period (using high quality materials that are fit for purpose, appropriate for the use and location to which they relate and are local where possible) is important and will enhance the special interest of the Conservation Area.

A shop front is part of a building as a whole, rather than being a separate entity. The design of shop fronts therefore needs to reflect the style, proportions, vertical or horizontal emphasis and detailing of the rest of the building, particularly the principal elevation.

The design of shop fronts should incorporate safe, easy and convenient access to the premises for everyone including disabled and elderly customers and customers with buggies.

#### Research and Investigation

To inform the design of new shop fronts, it will often be beneficial to undertake some research and investigation to understand what was present historically and establish whether any original features or signage survive.

Historic photos of the Conservation Area provide a glimpse into the past and provide evidence and inspiration for the design of new shop fronts. Architectural drawings of buildings and their shop fronts also provide information on the historic arrangement of shop fronts and the materials and signage used. A small selection of historic photos and drawings are included within this guidance, but it is advised that research is undertaken to inform new designs to ensure these are in keeping with the historic character of the Conservation Area. Plymouth Archives, held at The Box, have a wealth of photos and drawings related to the Conservation Area, including its shops.

Original 1950s or 1960s features clearly survive within some shop frontages, such as recessed entrances, tiled thresholds and stone plinths. Where these survive, they should be retained and incorporated into new designs. Other original features may be concealed by modern features and therefore investigation is important prior to designing new proposals.

Historic signage may be present behind modern fascias and whilst it may not be possible or desirable to retain this within new designs, it can serve to provide inspiration for new signage. It is also important that surviving original signage is appropriately recorded before being removed as this will add to the wider understanding of the Conservation Area and add to the evidence base for new shop front design across the city centre.



Entrance and display window of former Popham's Department Store in Royal Parade



Former Burton's Menswear in Old Town Street





## Design Advice

Post-war shop fronts have specific design characteristics and features which make them distinct from both older Victorian and modern shops. They have larger areas of glazing and less decorative and architectural features than their Victorian counterparts but have more consistency in their signage and material palette than modern shop fronts.

### Components of a shop front

Shop fronts need to sit within the original building framework set by structural features within the elevation. Generally, the components of Post-War shop fronts are:

- large display windows;
- simple pilasters framing the windows, usually in stone or stone composite;
- plain plinth at the base (what would have historically been termed a stallriser), often in a contrasting and more durable stone to the main shop front. Plinths vary in height, sometimes being very low to maximise the glazing area above;
- entrances are often recessed, especially where there is no projecting canopy to provide shelter, and either located centrally or to one side;
- where recessed, the glazing on either side of the entrance is canted to provide a more generous entrance and better visibility of shop displays and goods within. Floors within recessed entrances may be tiled; and
- there may be other architectural features such as metal ventilation grilles or letter boxes.

## Display windows

Large areas of glazing is an important feature of shop fronts of this period, so goods and displays can attract attention from outside. Therefore:

- display windows should be fully glazed where the unit is still in retail use, other uses such as public art displays may be suitable where there has been change of use;
- windows will be unencumbered by excessive advertising and signage, such as posters, and will not be boarded up;
- display windows will be framed with metal such as brass, steel or aluminium;
- framing is generally very slender to maximise glazing area;
- display windows and interiors of shops will have bright internal lighting to advertise and showcase goods and will naturally deter break-ins; and
- roller shutters should be avoided.



Marks and Spencer shop front, 1952

## Signage

1950s and 1960s signage is one of the most distinct features of shop fronts and whilst it will likely not be appropriate to replicate historic signage exactly, there are elements which it is desirable to recreate. Signage should complement the design of the shop front and building, conveying a sense of permanence and quality. The following need to be considered:

- individual lettered signage is characteristic and will be desirable: fonts which take inspiration from the 1950s would be beneficial where this can be incorporated into corporate branding;
- signage is not always on the fascia but may also commonly be positioned above, particularly to department stores where there is zone for signage above the entrance. The benefit of positioning signage above the fascias is that it is visible above canopies;
- where fascias are not used for signage, these are generally plain or have simple patterned finishes;
- fascia signage should not be overly large and be in proportion with the scale of the shop front within which it sits;
- where adjacent shop fronts are of similar scale and appearance, the signage zone within each should be of consistent height and scale;
- limited signage is desirable, just one set of lettering or perhaps two or three for department stores with longer elevations;
- where original signage zone are present or uncovered this should be the area used going forward and not be over clad.
- design of signage should be restrained, avoiding lurid colours and using a limited material palette. Metal and timber would be desirable over plastics;
- signage should not be internally illuminated; and
- projecting and hanging signage is not commonly used and may require historic evidence to be acceptable.



### Canopies

Many buildings within the retail zone of the Conservation Area have solid, projecting canopies, often combined with fabric canopies to provide further shelter. Where there is no solid canopy, fabric canopies were very common historically. The following need to be considered:

- where there is a solid canopy, fabric canopies hang vertically down;
- there may be an opportunity to reintroduce lost canopies where this is appropriate;
- these hanging canopies have a consistent design across a row of shops to provide a visual coherence to the street scene;
- in such instances, canopies are generally unbranded, simple plain or striped appearance;
- where there is no solid canopy, fabric canopies will project out at an angle, above fascias but below signage, if this is not in fascia zone. Here there is more scope for individuality in terms of the design of canopies, however colour palettes will be limited and designs and any branding restrained;
- fabric canopies will be retractable; and
- there may be opportunities to incorporate lighting into solid projecting canopies.

### Colour

There is the opportunity to enhance or reintroduce colours consistent with the Mid-Century period

- Colour palette showcased and used for the 1951 Festival of Britain could offer potential options for a range of architectural features including window frames, shop surrounds and canopies.

### Permissions Required

Changes to shop fronts will require planning permission, and, if part of a listed building, Listed Building Consent. Changes to signage and advertising will require Advertisement Consent. Installation of fabric canopies will also require consents.



*New George Street shops in the 1950s*

### 9.5.4 RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Responding to the climate change is a critical activity for Plymouth following the declaration of a climate emergency in 2019. There are many opportunities in the Conservation Area which will assist in tackling climate change.

For individual buildings this means improving thermal efficiency and reducing carbon-based energy consumption. Internally, adding insulation and installing secondary glazing will be beneficial. Externally, installing solar panels for the many flat roofs within the Conservation Area will be encouraged as well as other forms of renewable energy sources such as air sourced heat pumps as long as these can be integrated in a way that is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Each building is different and each will have different ways of being adapted. For more detailed information on adapting buildings in response to climate change see [Plymouth Climate Emergency Action Plan 2019](#) and Historic England's website for guidance related specifically to adapting historic buildings.

### Permissions Required

For unlisted buildings, internal works will not require planning permission, however for any works which affect the exterior of a building it will be required. Any works to listed buildings, both internal and external, will require Listed Building Consent and those to the exterior will also require planning permission.



## PART D: FURTHER INFORMATION AND APPENDICES

Further Information	90
Appendix A: Royal Parade Street Audit	92
Appendix B: Historic Context	105
Appendix C: Larger Plans	111







## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following sources have been used for the preparation of this document.

### Reports

Plymouth City Council, *Plymouth City Centre Proposed Conservation Area Designation Assessment* (July 2019)

Portico Heritage, *Plymouth City Centre: Potential Core City Centre Conservation Area Options* (March 2019)

Asset Heritage Consulting, *Heritage Audit and Statement of Significance in respect of Plymouth City Centre* (May 2014)

### Books / Publications

J Paton Watson and P Abercrombie, *A Plan for Plymouth* (Underhill Ltd, 1943)

MBM Arquitectes with AZ Urban Studio, *A Vision for Plymouth* (2003). Available from: [https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/AVisionForPlymouthFinalReport\\_0.pdf](https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/AVisionForPlymouthFinalReport_0.pdf)

Plymouth City Council & LDA Design, *Plymouth Tall Buildings Strategy* (2005). Available from: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/DraftTallBuildingStrategy.pdf>

J Gould, *Plymouth: Vision of a Modern City* (Historic England, 2010)

C and J Gould, *Coventry: The Making of a Modern City, 1939-73* (Historic England, 2016)

E Harwood, *Space, Hope and Brutalism* (Yale, 2016)

PKM Van Roosmalen, *Mastering the City: North-European Town Planning 1900-2000, Le Havre 1946: Plan for Reconstruction*, pp226-273 (NAi Publishers/EFL Publications, Rotterdam, 1998)

M Webb, *Architecture in Britain Today* (Country Life, 1969)

B Cherry and N Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Devon* (Yale, 1991)

M Clapson, *The Blitz Companion* (University of Westminster Press, 2019)

P Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An intellectual history of urban planning and design since 1880* (John Wiley and Sons, 2014)

HF Whitfeld, *Plymouth and Devonport : in times of war and peace* (Chapple, 1900)

### Journals

Civic Centre, Plymouth, *Architectural Review*, June 1962 pp 435-77

JM Diefendorf, *Urban Reconstruction in Europe After World War II* *Urban Studies* Vol. 26, No. 1 (1989), pp. 128-143

S Essex and M Brayshay, *Boldness diminished? The Post-War battle to replan a bomb-damaged provincial city*. *Urban History* Vol. 35, No.3. (2008)

S Essex and M Brayshay, *Town versus Country in the 1940s: Planning the Contested Space of a City Region in the Aftermath of the Second World War*. *The Town Planning Review* Vol. 76, No. 3. (2005)

A While, *Modernism vs Urban Renaissance: Negotiating Post-war Heritage in English City Centres*. *Urban Studies* Vol. 43, No. 13. (2006)

R Childs, D and D A C A Boyne, *Plymouth: A Survey*. *Architects' Journal* 115, PP 716-19. (1952)

## Other sources

[https://www.bernezac.com/Royan\\_reconstruction\\_uk.htm](https://www.bernezac.com/Royan_reconstruction_uk.htm)

J Craigie, *The Way We Live* (1946) Film accessed via: <https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-way-we-live-1946-online>

Historic imagery for the Development section of this document has been sourced from The Box Plymouth and has been reproduced with their kind permission. Permission is pending for the other historic imagery.

For further study, the Plymouth Archives at The Box hold material of relevance to the development and significance of Post-War Plymouth City Centre.

## LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/9/contents>

National Planning Policy Framework (2019): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationalplanning-policy-framework--2>

Planning Practice Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practiceguidance>

Planning Portal: <https://www.planningportal.co.uk>

The Plymouth Plan: <https://theplymouthplan.com/>

Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/plymouthandsouthwestdevonjointlocalplan>



## GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

### Historic England

Historic England's website contains a range of advice and guidance on conservation best practice, such as Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance and guides on understanding heritage value, setting and views, to specific guides on types of repairs, energy efficiency and historic buildings and types of buildings. This information can largely be found in the advice area of their website: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/>

Links to the most relevant guidance and that used in the preparation of the CAAMP are below.

Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management  
Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition): <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-area-appraisal-designation-management-advice-note-1/>

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/>

The Setting of Heritage Assets Good Practice Advice in Planning  
Note 3: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/>

National Heritage List for England: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Plymouth Climate Emergency Action Plan: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PlymouthsClimateEmergencyActionPlan01.pdf>

### Plymouth City Council

Plymouth City Council pre-application advice: <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/planningandbuildingcontrol/planningapplications/whenyouneedplanningpermission/planningpreapplicationadvice>

### Twentieth Century Society

The Twentieth Century Society are the national amenity group campaigning for the preservation of buildings and places developed since 1914. Their website contains useful resources: <https://c20society.org.uk/>

## USEFUL CONTACTS

### Plymouth City Council

Planning and Building Control  
Plymouth City Council  
Plymouth  
PL1 3BJ  
Email: [planningconsents@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:planningconsents@plymouth.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01752 304366

### Historic England South-West Regional Office

Fermentation North (1st Floor)  
Finzels Reach  
Hawkins Lane  
Bristol  
BS1 6JQ  
Email: [southwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:southwest@HistoricEngland.org.uk)  
Telephone: 0117 9751308



## A.1 CHARACTER AND SPECIAL INTEREST

Royal Parade is, with Armada Way, one of the most important streets in the Conservation Area. It connects the city centre with other more historic and secondary parts of the city via Derry's Cross and St Andrew's Roundabouts. The street is a broad, straight avenue on an east to west alignment. It inclines from the western end up to St Andrew's Cross.

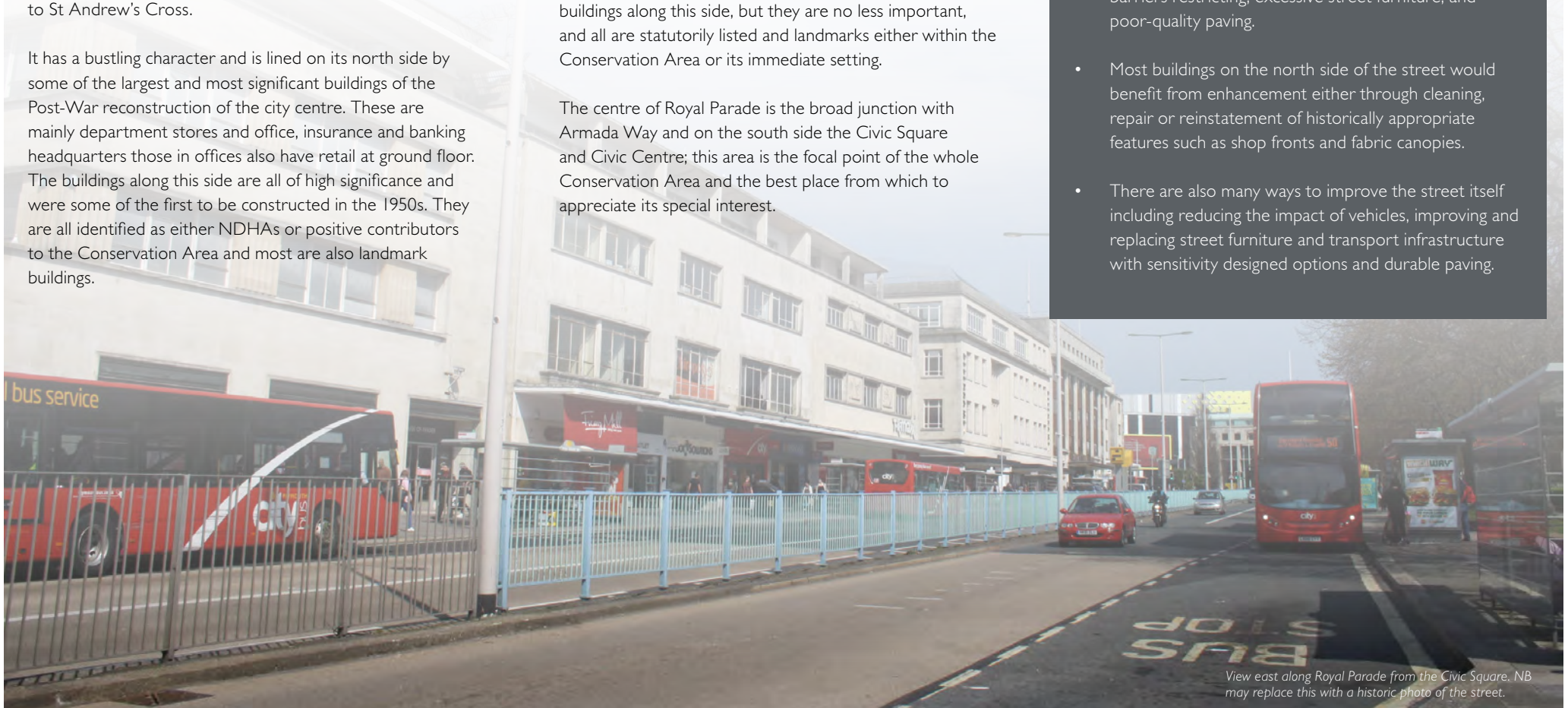
It has a bustling character and is lined on its north side by some of the largest and most significant buildings of the Post-War reconstruction of the city centre. These are mainly department stores and office, insurance and banking headquarters those in offices also have retail at ground floor. The buildings along this side are all of high significance and were some of the first to be constructed in the 1950s. They are all identified as either NDHAs or positive contributors to the Conservation Area and most are also landmark buildings.

Contrasting is the south side, where buildings are separated from the road by an avenue of trees either side a lawned band. Some pre-war buildings survived redevelopment on this side, namely St Andrew's Church and the Guildhall, although both underwent restoration and alteration, and the Royal Theatre was not completed until the early 1980s. There is therefore a less formal arrangement to the buildings along this side, but they are no less important, and all are statutorily listed and landmarks either within the Conservation Area or its immediate setting.

The centre of Royal Parade is the broad junction with Armada Way and on the south side the Civic Square and Civic Centre; this area is the focal point of the whole Conservation Area and the best place from which to appreciate its special interest.

## QUICK FACTS

- Royal Parade is one of the most important streets in the Conservation Area.
- Its issues are related to: density of traffic; the central barriers restricting; excessive street furniture; and poor-quality paving.
- Most buildings on the north side of the street would benefit from enhancement either through cleaning, repair or reinstatement of historically appropriate features such as shop fronts and fabric canopies.
- There are also many ways to improve the street itself including reducing the impact of vehicles, improving and replacing street furniture and transport infrastructure with sensitivity designed options and durable paving.



View east along Royal Parade from the Civic Square. NB may replace this with a historic photo of the street.





## A.2 THE BUILDINGS

The buildings which line Royal Parade form its backdrop and contribute greatly to its special interest. However, lack of maintenance, vacancy and inappropriate alterations have diluted the contribution these buildings make. Canopies and upper-level elevations and windows are in a deteriorating condition in some cases and stained from pollution. Shop fronts that have been altered or replaced with modern retail signage being a particularly detracting element of the street scene. Vacancy of these buildings is also beginning to be an issue and one which is likely to accelerate over the coming period. Historic features such as fabric canopies have also been lost over time.

This section identifies the specific issues and opportunities with the buildings along the north side of Royal Parade and which it would be most impactful to prioritise. On the south side the only buildings within the Conservation Area boundary are the Royal Theatre, which is in a good condition, and the Civic Centre, for which redevelopment and reuse is planned.

### Norwich Union House

#### *Donald Hamilton Wakeford & Partners (1950 to 1952)*

- Removing graffiti which is present at a high level of the Royal Parade elevation.
- Stone cleaning, in particular above the canopy, to the portals and columns and around the windows.
- The metal window frames to the upper-level windows appear to be in a reasonable condition but could benefit from overhauling.
- There is an opportunity to reinstate Norwich Union House lettered signage to the top of the elevation.
- The ground floor to this building has always been divided into multiple shop units, today there are issues with vacancy, excessive signage and the use of modern plastic materials.
- The structure of the shop fronts have almost wholly been replaced although a couple retain their plinths (Simply Local is granite for example).
- There is a general lack of maintenance and upkeep to the shop fronts and the current frontages are low quality.
- There is a lack of coherence to the appearance of the retail units.
- The shop fronts have large fascia signs or boards where units are vacant, which are not characteristic.
- Signage is sometimes internally lit, which is also not characteristic.
- There is use of temporary thin plastic signs.
- There are some metal roller shutters.
- There has been loss of the hanging fabric canopies.
- There has been alteration of entrance porch feature to centre of St Andrew's Cross elevation.

### Principal Opportunities

The upper levels of the building are in a reasonable condition and although there would be benefit from stone cleaning and window works, the most impactful opportunity to enhance this building is at ground level with the reinstatement of more historically appropriate shop fronts and signage and installation of new fabric canopies. Those shop fronts on the Royal Parade and St Andrew's Cross elevations are slightly more sympathetic or retain original features and therefore it is those along Old Town Street which may benefit more greatly from attention.





## Lloyd's Bank / Former Popham's Department Store

### Easton & Robertson (1953/55-57)

- Removing graffiti which is present at a high level of the Royal Parade elevation.
- Stone cleaning, in particular the top storey including the decorative reliefs.
- The high level metal railings are in need of maintenance and repainting due to rusting.
- The timber work of the upper-levels in need of treating, maintenance and repair as its condition appears to be relatively poor and deteriorating.
- It would be beneficial to remove the inappropriate modern curved canopy to the Lloyds entrance, it is not clear that there was ever a canopy here historically. A more sympathetic canopy could be considered if necessary.
- The display windows under the canopy retain their historic dimensions and plinth but the Brass Money windows have had the glazing replaced with multi-paned units, which are uncharacteristic.
- The outer bays were originally windows but have been replaced with an entrance to the left and ATMs to the right, these could be returned to glazing or be altered to be more sympathetic to the historic character.

- The Brass Monkey entrance signage is positioned in the wrong place, it could be returned to its historic position within the stone panel above the entrance.
- The signage to the upper levels, between first and second floors, has been lost and could be reinstated.
- The timber elevation was, for a time, painted white shortly after the building's completion, could be justified to return if desirable but it was originally dark timber as currently.



## Principal Opportunities

Repair and refurbishment of the timber cladding would be one of the most impactful enhancements which could be made to this building. Similarly removing the Lloyds canopy and improving the appearance of the ground floor outer bays (ATMs and new entrance) would be of great benefit. Returning the Brass Monkey's windows back to full glazing would also be of considerable benefit to the street scene.





## Debenhams (formerly Spooners Department Store)

### Healing & Overbury (1954 to 1956)

- This building has become vacant and is therefore vulnerable to deterioration through lack of maintenance and use.
- Some stone cleaning would be beneficial, specifically projecting elements and above the main entrance.
- Removal of the lettered signage over vertical window features would be beneficial.
- Removal of roof top pigeon netting.
- The canopy has been replaced (or greatly altered) and by doing so has lost its finesse, it would benefit from alteration or replacement with a slenderer version in appropriate materials.
- The canopy over the entrance is lost and there is an opportunity to reinstate this feature.
- The ground floor glazed display windows have been covered with posters or blind panels, it would be beneficial to remove and return to full glazing.
- The pilasters and stallrisers to the ground floor windows have been replaced with polished stone, these could be returned to paler Portland stone with a shallow contrasting stall riser.

### Principal Opportunities

Of principal importance will be finding a new use or new uses for this building now Debenhams have vacated. Replacement of the canopy and its reinstatement over the entrance are also great opportunities to enhance this building. Also of benefit would be removing less appropriate additions such as the pigeon netting and the modern materials to the ground floor shop front pilasters and stall risers.







### TK Maxx (formerly John Yeo Department Store)

#### *Donald Hamilton Wakeford & Partners (1951 to 1953)*

- Some stone cleaning would be beneficial, specifically projecting elements and decorative reliefs.
- Removal of pigeon spikes to the roof terrace balustrade.
- The metal window frames to the upper-level windows are in a poor condition, suffering from rusting and would benefit from repair and repainting.
- The ground floor has been altered to change the entrance position and with the insertion of a plastic fascia band and signage, the fascia band could be removed to reveal original finish or allow a more sympathetic replacement to be installed.
- The Bedford Way corner, altered to form recessed corner entrance, could be altered to be more in keeping with historic character or else the original entrance arrangement could be reinstated (the original entrance was recessed in the centre of the Royal Parade elevation).
- The display windows have been infilled with posters and blind panels, it would be beneficial to remove these to reinstate full glazing.

#### Principal Opportunities

The principal opportunities within this building are to repair and enhance the upper floor levels, overhauling the metal windows and cleaning the façade. Beyond this removal of the posters to the display windows to reinstate a fully glazed appearance would be of considerable benefit, as would removing or replacing the plastic fascia band.





## 30-36 Royal Parade

*Cecil J. Adams of Donald Hamilton Wakeford & Partners (1951 to 1953)*

- Some stone cleaning would be beneficial, in particular to the window framing and top storey terrace.
- The upper-level windows are in a poor condition, suffering from rusting and would benefit from repair and repainting.
- Removal of the window advertising film to upper floor window.
- The roof extension (part of the Dingles roof extension) creates a cluttered roovescape, it would be beneficial to rationalise as part of any replacement of this roof extension.
- The ground floor to this building has always been divided into multiple shop units, today there are issues with excessive and overly large signage and the use of modern plastic materials.
- The structure of the shop fronts has wholly been replaced with the possible exception of Foot Solutions which appears to retain the original framework of glazing and canted, recessed central entrance.
- There is a general lack of maintenance and upkeep to the shop fronts and the current frontages are low quality.
- There is a lack of coherence to the appearance of the retail units.
- Fabric canopies survive although some have been replaced with modern, branded versions, it would be beneficial to return these to plain stripped versions to bring more coherence to the row of units.
- Fascia signage is overly large and sometimes internally lit, which is not characteristic.



## Principal Opportunities

The most impactful opportunity to enhance this building is at ground level with the improvement of the retail units. This includes reinstatement of more historically appropriate shop fronts and signage and to bring more coherence to the row. At the upper levels there would be considerable benefit in overhauling the metal windows as well as targeted stone cleaning.





## Dingles / House of Fraser

*Thomas S. Tait of Sir John Burnet Tait & Partners (1949 to 1951, altered 1989)*

- The stone elevations of this building are in considerable need of stone cleaning including the decorative reliefs.
- The 1980s roof extension is of lower quality materials and creates a cluttered roofscape, it would benefit from replacement with a more sympathetic, rationalised design.
- The upper level windows are in a reasonable condition but may benefit from repair and repainting.
- It would be beneficial to remove the opaque films to the upper level windows to return to the windows to full glazing.
- Pigeon netting to recessed windows would benefit from removal and replacement with a more sympathetic and humane alternative.
- The canopy has been replaced (or greatly altered) and has doing so lost its finesse, it would benefit from alteration or replacement with a slenderer version in appropriate materials.
- Some of the ground floor display windows have been altered with the loss of the picture mount-like framing within, this could be reinstated.
- Parts of the display windows have been infilled with posters or blind panels, it would be beneficial to remove these to reinstate full glazing.
- There is an excess of signage within the display windows which would be better removed.
- Other elements of the ground floor have been altered including the entrance doors, it would be beneficial to return these features to a more historically sympathetic appearance.

## Principal Opportunities

This building is one of the landmark buildings in the Conservation Area and forms the gateway to Armada Way with Pearl Assurance House. The Conservation Area as a whole would therefore greatly benefit from improvements to this building, not just to Royal Parade but also to the Armada Way elevation. The principal opportunities are replacing the roof extension, cleaning of the stone elevations, restoring the canopy and returning full glazing to ground and upper levels by removing the plastic film.







## Pearl Assurance House

*Alec F. French in association with Sir John Burnet Tait & Partners (1950 to 1952)*

- The stone elevations of this building are in considerable need of stone cleaning including both main elevations and the tower.
- The upper level windows are in a reasonable condition but may benefit from repair and repainting.
- The pigeon spikes to the upper level windows and sign lettering would benefit removal and replacement with a post and wire alternative which is more humane and less visually intrusive.
- Removal of the window advertising film to first floor windows of western half of the building.
- Thin plastic signs attached to upper levels of elevation are inappropriate and would benefit from removal.
- The underside of the canopy is in need of repair and cleaning or painting.
- The ground floor to this building has always been divided into multiple shop units, today there are issues with vacancy, excessive signage and the use of modern plastic materials.
- The structure of the shop fronts have mostly been replaced although a couple retain their original arrangement (for example: former Whoopee store) or retain features such as contrasting stone plinths.
- There is a general lack of maintenance and upkeep to the shop fronts and the current frontages are low quality.
- There is a lack of coherence to the appearance of the retail units.
- The shop fronts have large fascia signs, which are not characteristic.
- Signage is sometimes internally lit, which is also not characteristic.
- There has been loss of the hanging fabric canopies.

- The porch to the entrance midway along the Royal Parade elevation has been altered through the addition of inappropriate signage, a roller shutter and vents and film to the windows, which it would be beneficial to reverse.

## Principal Opportunities

This building is one of the landmark buildings in the Conservation Area and forms the gateway to Armada Way with Dingles/House of Fraser. The Conservation Area as a whole would therefore greatly benefit from improvements to this building, not just to Royal Parade but also to the Armada Way elevation. The principal opportunities are cleaning of the elevations and reinstatement of more historically appropriate shop fronts and signage, including reinstatement of fabric canopies.





### Cooperative Building / Derrys Department Store

*W.J. Reed, staff architect to The Co-operative Wholesale Society (1950 to 1952, altered 2016 to 2021)*

- The hanging fabric canopies have been lost and could be reinstated.
- There is internally lit shop signage to the ground floor and brightly coloured, large fascia panels/signage which it may be beneficial to remove in future or replaced (if needed) with something more appropriate.

#### Principal Opportunities

This building has recently undergone extensive refurbishment and is in an excellent condition. Further enhancement could be considered by reinstating hanging fabric canopies.







### A.3 THE STREET AND PUBLIC REALM

In addition to improvements to the buildings along Royal Parade, there are considerable opportunities to enhance the experience of the street for those using the Conservation Area. Royal Parade is the busiest route within the Conservation Area and has undergone incremental changes over the decades which detract from its special interest and the contribution it makes to the Conservation Area as a whole. This issues it faces are:

- Royal Parade is very busy with traffic, both private vehicles and buses. Not only is there noise and visual disruption as a result but the area is also very polluted, which is causing staining to buildings and has environmental and health impacts.
- Incremental changes and additions to the traffic infrastructure have not only obscured some of its historic character but also reduced the north to south permeability through the Conservation Area. The central guard rails are particularly obstructive but the many bus stands, double pairs of traffic lights and speed cameras all negatively contribute and distract from the appreciation of the Post-War character.
- Within the public realm there is an excess of street furniture which adds to the visual clutter of the street scene. Of particular issue are litter bins and service boxes of which there are many on both sides of the street and sometimes inappropriately located.

- A related issue is the appearance of street furniture, which presents a variety of modern styles that are not appropriate to the Post-War character of the Conservation Area. Public seating is in a Victoriana style, litter bins are low-quality plastic and oversized and there is a mixture of fixed advertising and cycle stand styles. Street lighting is generally sympathetic, except for those around the pedestrian crossing between the Civic Square and Armada Way.

- The surface treatments used within Royal Parade are also of mixed appearance and quality. Those on the northside are durable and sympathetic to the Post-War character of the area being similar in appearance to the original. However, the south side has patchwork of paving, many areas of which are uneven, cracked or missing. Whilst some parts have been resurfaced, such as the edge of the Civic Square and in front of the Royal Theatre, most of this side of the street is of low quality and detracts from the appearance of the Conservation Area.



Double pairs of traffic lights add clutter to the street scene



Cracked and uneven paving slabs to south side of the street



Guard rail and speed cameras along the centre of the road



Row of seven bus stands between Armada Way and St Andrew's Cross





Example of oversized, plastic litter bin



Public seating that is not in keeping with the Post-War character of the area



Pollution is causing staining to the Portland stone of buildings which line the street



Unsympathetic alterations to shop fronts and signage and vacant units



Whilst these are not insignificant issues, they present real opportunities to enhance Royal Parade and thus the Conservation Area as a whole. The principal opportunities for enhancing the street and public realm are:

- removing the guard rails in the centre of the road and returning a grass verge;
- consider options for improving permeability over Royal Parade, for example through design improvements to existing crossing points ;
- making the existing pedestrian crossings at either end of the road single ones to halve the number of traffic light posts required;
- consider options to reduce the impact of cars and service vehicles from Royal Parade or slow the speed of such vehicles as part of a wide transport audit to improve air quality, reduce carbon and improve pedestrian experience within the Conservation Area;
- as part of the same transport audit, a review of the bus stands would be beneficial with consideration given to reducing the visual and physical dominance of this type of street furniture;
- relocation of service boxes, as part of any public realm works, to more discrete locations where these are particularly visually intrusive;
- improve and replace items of street furniture, including litter bins and public seating, and replacement of poor quality, non-original items with high-quality, sensitively-designed alternatives that are sympathetic to the Post-War character of the Conservation Area; and
- replacing surface treatments to all areas of the south side of the street which have not been recently upgraded. Designs taking inspiration from historical precedent and using durable materials.







#### A.4 CONCLUSIONS

Many of the issues within Royal Parade are also present in the Conservation Area more widely, which are covered in [Section 8.0](#). However, Royal Parade is a principal route through the Conservation Area and would therefore benefit most greatly from targeted enhancement.

The key priorities are:

- removal of the guard rail to centre of Royal Parade;
- undertake a wider transport audit with the aim of reducing the impact of traffic and pollution and increasing pedestrian crossing and permeability across the road;
- reinstatement of historically appropriate shop fronts to Pearl Assurance House, 30-36 Royal Parade and Norwich Union House. These buildings contain individual retail units and therefore have undergone most change and have least consistency;
- cleaning of stonework to the most important buildings: Pearl Assurance House and Dingles/House of Fraser;
- finding new tenants for vacant shop units, including Debenhams;
- reinstating hanging fabric canopies of consistent design;
- installing consistent and high-quality surface treatments to the south side of Royal Parade; and
- rationalising street furniture and installation of sensitively designed replacements.



*The north side of Royal Parade, demonstrating the architectural variety but shared aesthetic of the early buildings of the Plan for Plymouth.*





## B.1 INTRODUCTION

This appendix sets out the historic context for the Post-War city centre, through European and UK comparative analysis. The scope of this study means it is not exhaustive nor does it investigate in any fine detail the later alterations to the comparatives, though this is noted where possible. Huge numbers of cities were reconstructed after the war across Europe and the approaches to the key questions of how to clear debris, how to house people and what should remain of the earlier fabric of the city, along with many other questions of planning, architecture and society, were addressed at the same time. In 1945, a great many European cities lay in ruins, many with long histories, great cultural and institutional histories. One of the prime considerations therefore, both here and on the continent, was the degree to which modernisation, both in planning and architectural terms, was to play and apart and what, if any role, the previous heritage of the place had in future. Apart from Exeter and Coventry, which are discussed last and in less detail, the comparative analysis has been restricted to port cities or cities with a waterfront, to address the nature of connectivity and how it was articulated in each place.

Therefore, this analysis is confined to those cities on the continent and in the UK that opted for a modern or modernist project in their rebuilding efforts. Considering the number of cities requiring comprehensive redevelopment across Europe post-1945, the number that decided on that specifically modern route is small and the ones compared are here listed

## B2 THE EUROPEAN CONTEXT

### LE HAVRE

Due to its UNESCO status as a world heritage site, Le Havre is often cited as the pre-eminent Post-War planned city of Europe. It was designed and rebuilt between 1945 and 1964 by a planning and architectural team headed by Auguste Perret. The remarkable unity of the city is due to the unity of methodology and the use of prefabrication, the systematic utilization of a modular grid and the innovative exploitation of the potential of concrete. Indicative of a dual effort to conserve the plan form of the old city, but bring new ideas of urban design, Le Havre is a 17th to 18th century city, dressed in modernism. Perret himself developed a morphology that

he based on earlier forms of French architecture, but in concrete and many of the buildings expose their structural make-up. Public acceptance of the original schemes was not forthcoming and Perret was forced to collaborate on the final designs but nevertheless, Le Havre was constructed as a new, modernist grid city.

The city centre was based on the spatial sequence of streets and plazas found in pre-war Le Havre. The plan provided for plazas, elevated corner buildings as landmarks and wide boulevards arranged in a grid. Avenue Foch was designed as the main throughfare and featured promenades, shopping and housing on a tree-lined avenue.



*L'Avenue Foch Le Havre 1957*



## ROTTERDAM

Rotterdam was one of the first cities to be comprehensively bombed by the Luftwaffe. It was also a city that in the aftermath, most resolutely opted for modernisation. This was a fact most evident in the design of the Lijnbaan, which formed the retail and cultural heart of the rebuilt city. It was as a result, prototypical of Post-War urban shopping precincts across Europe. It was designed by the Rotterdam Architects Van den Broek and Bakema, working with the city planners.

The precedent for the Lijnbaan lay partly in the American suburban mall model of the immediate Post-War period, but it was also driven partly from consultation from retailers, who wanted a low-level shopping street with extensive glazing for maximum display area. Also important for the success of the scheme, was the proximity on plan of the cultural and administrative areas of the new city centre. Expressing the sociological theories first espoused by Lewis Mumford about the importance of relationships between the various elements of city living, Rotterdam brought these elements together in a cohesive whole. The architecture was purely modern with no decorative elements but planters, paving and signage made it appear cohesive and unified. The whole scheme was based on a dimensioning system of 1.1m lengthways and 1m crossways. The same 1.1m module determined the outdoor surface. Façades were composed of prefabricated concrete posts and parapets. Large glazed sections and display windows dominated the ground floor. The architecture was and remains, largely neutral, to allow for the display of goods and the appropriation of the shop fronts by proprietors.



*The Lijnbaan just after completion in July 1957*



## ROYAN

After its liberation from occupation in April, 1945, Royan was in ruins destroyed by allied, not German bombs and American napalm. Reconstruction started in 1949 and was a national responsibility within the framework of the Ministère de la Reconstruction. The expression “*modern laboratory of town planning and architecture*” was used to characterise the methods and the work of the architects and the town planners working in Royan. The architecture was predominantly concrete and some of the individual buildings, like the central market hall, were expressively modern and had a considerable flair. The Portique walk, built originally to go through the middle of the sea front, gave views on one side, of the beach and the estuary, and on the other, the view overlooking the market.

The town’s rebirth was immensely symbolic for France and it was a hugely popular tourist destination in the 1960s, seen as a vision of modernity. Some of its key buildings, like the circular concrete casino, have been lost, but Royan retains much original fabric, including the centrally positioned church of Notre Dame.

## B.3 PLYMOUTH IN EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The wholesale redevelopment of the city centre of Plymouth, sits somewhere between the complete unity of design of Le Havre and the distinctly modern projects in Rotterdam and Royan. These are examples of the variety of approaches taken to the necessity to clear away and impose a modern plan or build new over a partially kept or old city plan. In that, these cities are all different. What links them in particular is the visual language and coherence of them as unified piece of modern design and the experimental nature of some of the architecture. In planning terms, the urban relationship Plymouth city centre was designed to have with its administrative

and cultural spaces was exemplary and surpassed the efforts in Le Havre and Rotterdam. Perret’s plan was hamstrung by resistance in that regard and in Rotterdam, the closed off nature of the Lijnbaan meant that vistas were not as open as they were in Plymouth. Royan, the smallest of the reconstructed cities of Europe here, relied on architectural daring of individual buildings to convey modernity and rebuilding.

Plymouth, by contrast, was measured, taking its planning and zoning ideas from the foremost thinkers in the country about town planning, and using Beaux-Arts sensibilities as a starting point for axes, vistas and a sense of openness. Whilst there were certainly key, innovative buildings like the Civic Centre and the Pannier Market in particular, the majority of the buildings had their roots in a classical civic style. Armada Way bears comparison to the Lijnbaan for its precinct nature and indeed, after Princesshay in nearby Exeter (see [page 112](#)) it was an early exponent of a modern, shopping avenue. In its unity of appearance, Plymouth bears considerable comparison to Le Havre, with Portland stone, rather than concrete being prevalent. As a mixture of the sensibilities and expression discussed through the case histories here given, Plymouth is one of the largest and most coherent pieces of Post-War cityscape in Europe and in its planning, architecture and spatial interrelationships between functional areas, remains a unique expression of Post-War design in a European context, bringing together ideas together that although found elsewhere, are blended to a unique degree in the city centre.



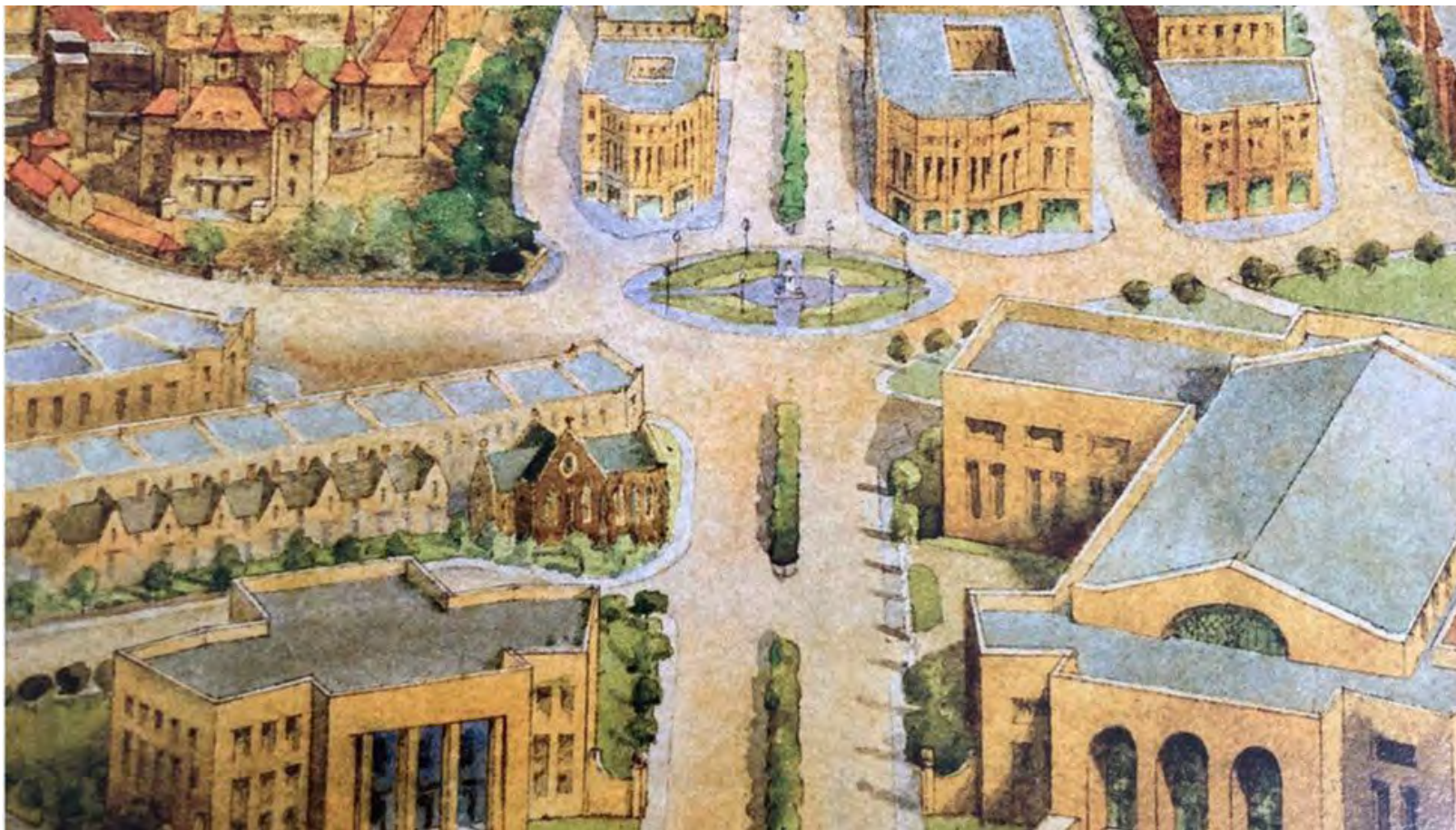
Church of Notre Dame, Royan in 1960





#### B.4 PLYMOUTH IN A UK CONTEXT

The blitzed towns of Bristol, Canterbury, Portsmouth, Southampton, Hull, Canterbury, Coventry and Plymouth, were all allocated capital for rebuilding and this put them all at the forefront of development. New Towns followed and much of the template for those came from the same well-spring of ideas that had informed the plans for bombed cities. The first comprehensive town plan to be published was for Southampton but it was Plymouth's ambitious plan that came together first. Swansea, which had been largely destroyed over just three nights in late 1941, also put forward ambitious plans that bear a distinct resemblance to what was constructed in Plymouth, but these were never fully realised.

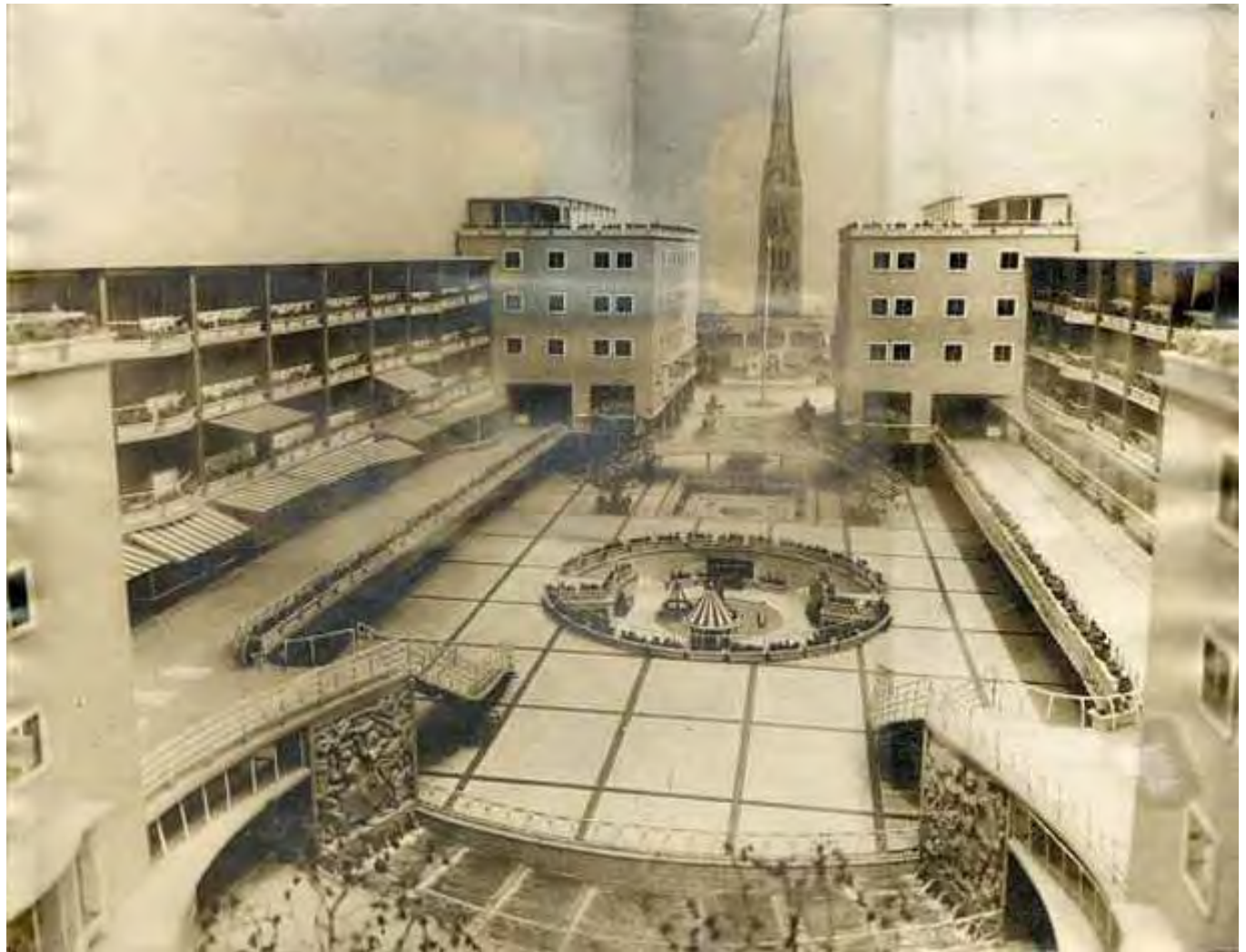


Swansea Plan Sketch



### COVENTRY

Coventry's destruction and reconstruction, largely because of the scale of the devastation, the unprecedented press access to the scenes of devastation and the loss of its cathedral means it is arguably the most well-known of Britain's Post-War planned city centres. The young architect Donald Gibson had already seen plans for a new civic area when he took the post in 1938. Gibson's altered plan of 1941 leant heavily on his studies of Le Corbusier's Urbanisme and Lewis Mumford's ideas. The most important component for Gibson was the shopping precinct and his plans for one actually pre-date the Lijnbaan, even if the latter was constructed first. He planned what he called 'Pedestrian Gardenway'. The Lower Precinct was designed by the City Architects Department built by the council and completed in 1958. It framed vistas of the church tower and had a considerable amount of public art planned for it. An arcade led directly to the undercover Market building. A circular concrete structure with a roof top car park. Coventry, by and large, produced individual buildings of high quality and the city's high rates income ensured the best materials and finishes for the buildings. Coventry's city centre, despite some key individual designations, has considerably altered and modernised with irreversible changes in particular to the precinct areas and the expansion of the university around the cathedral.



*Coventry Precinct in 1948*





### SOUTHAMPTON

Southampton, like Coventry had many extant medieval buildings before the war. Unlike Coventry, Southampton retained a great many of them in its city plan, that was drawn up quickly. Many of the buildings went up the same way. There was some quality in the materials and planning of Castle Street, but Southampton's plans were severely curtailed by a strong opposition to the loss of the surviving heritage. Its Post-War plan is therefore not as complete or coherent as it might have been. However, in contrast to Coventry, which lost over one hundred medieval buildings after the War to clearance, Southampton retained a high proportion of them.

### HULL

Abercrombie was responsible for the plan to rebuild Hull after the War. A civic survey of 1941 to 1943 was closely followed by Abercrombie's proposals which in turn, featured studies for the city conducted by Sir Edwin Lutyens. The pre-war street plan was used but the new buildings were modern and the large retail units were designed as a harmonious whole. There were few key buildings of note but the council's own Festival House was one such and was the first permanent building to go up after the Blitz. Its was designed in a restrained, Post-War civic style, in red brick.

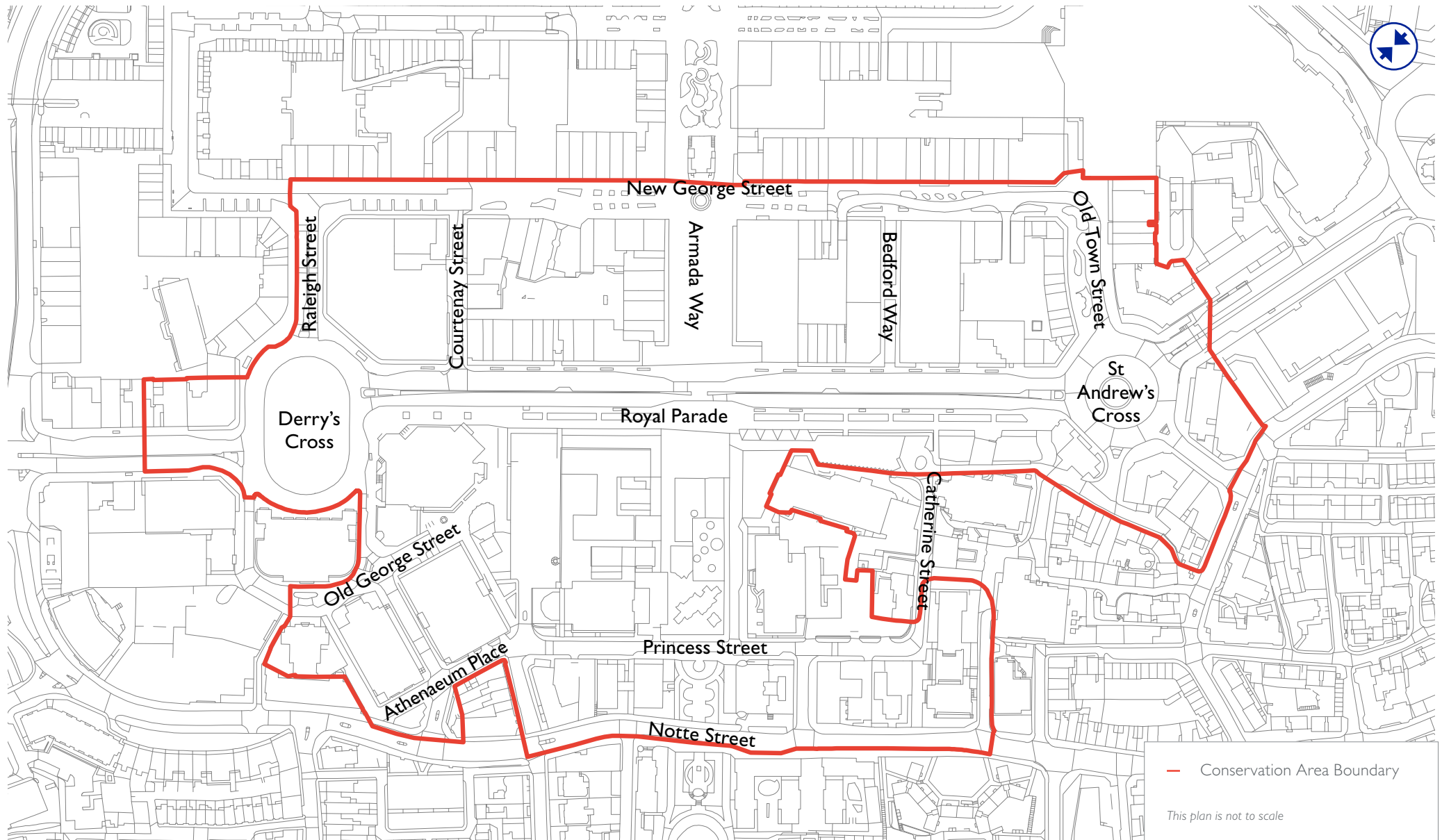
### EXETER

Exeter was the first to suffer the Luftwaffe's 'Baedaker' raids and in 1943 Thomas Sharp was commissioned to come up with a new plan for the city centre. Published in *Exeter Phoenix* in 1946, Sharp's proposals attempted to keep the city's small scale, not replace the superb lost set-pieces of Southernhay or Bedford Circus and design a new shopping precinct to frame the cathedral. Sharp had published a book, *English Panorama*, in 1936 which set out theories for a revival of the picturesque in urban design. Exeter was his opportunity to put some of those ideas into practice. The buildings were of small scale and of considerable variety. The High Street was mostly brick and in a restrained Post-War civic style based largely on a Scandinavian precedent. Princesshay, the precinct that framed views of the cathedral was the only set-piece and like a smaller version of Lijnbaan had large plate windows, was low rise and had central planting and seating. Princesshay and a number of contemporary buildings, was demolished in 2005.



Exeter's Princesshay in 1970





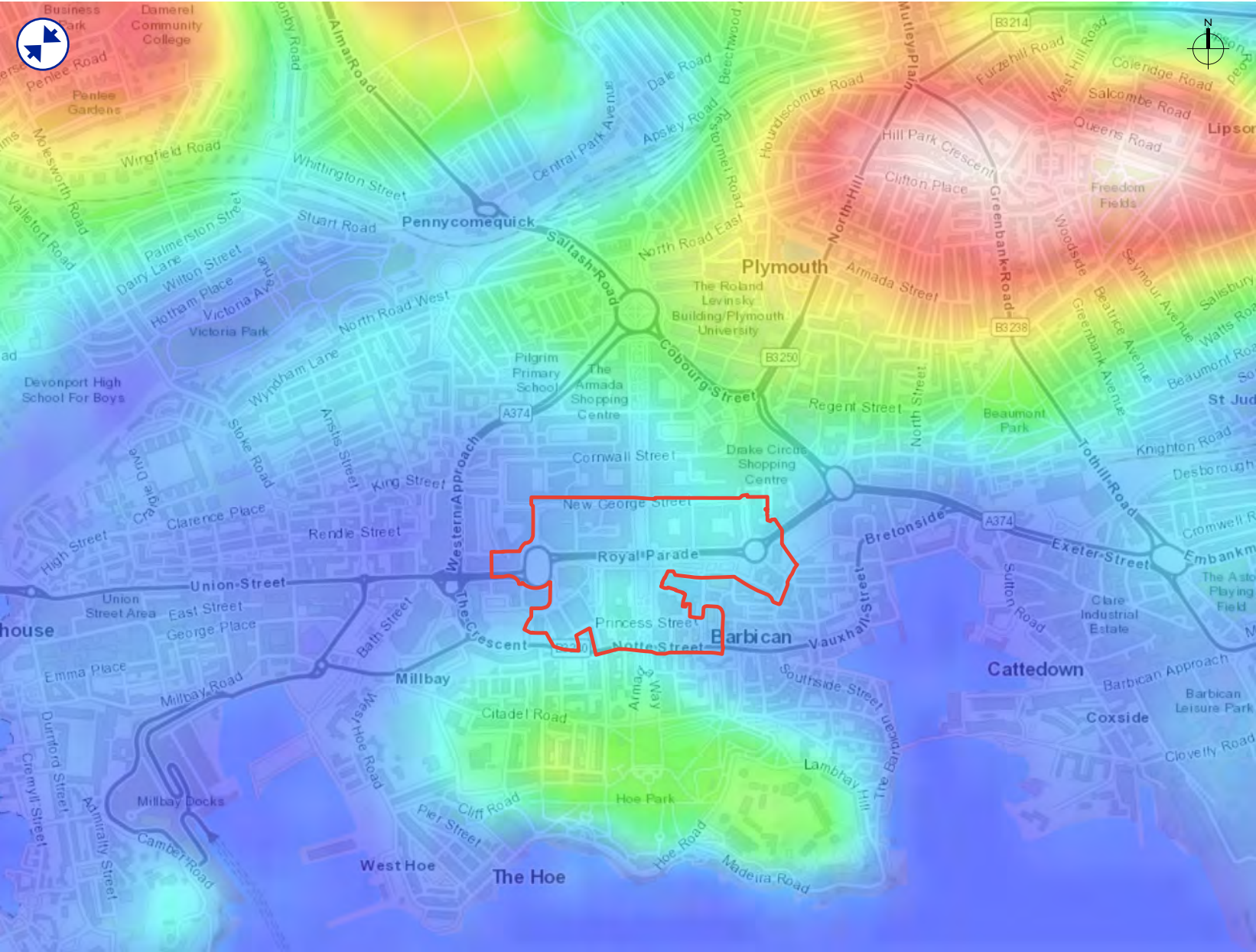
Plan 1: The boundary of Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area





Plan 2: Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area within its wider context



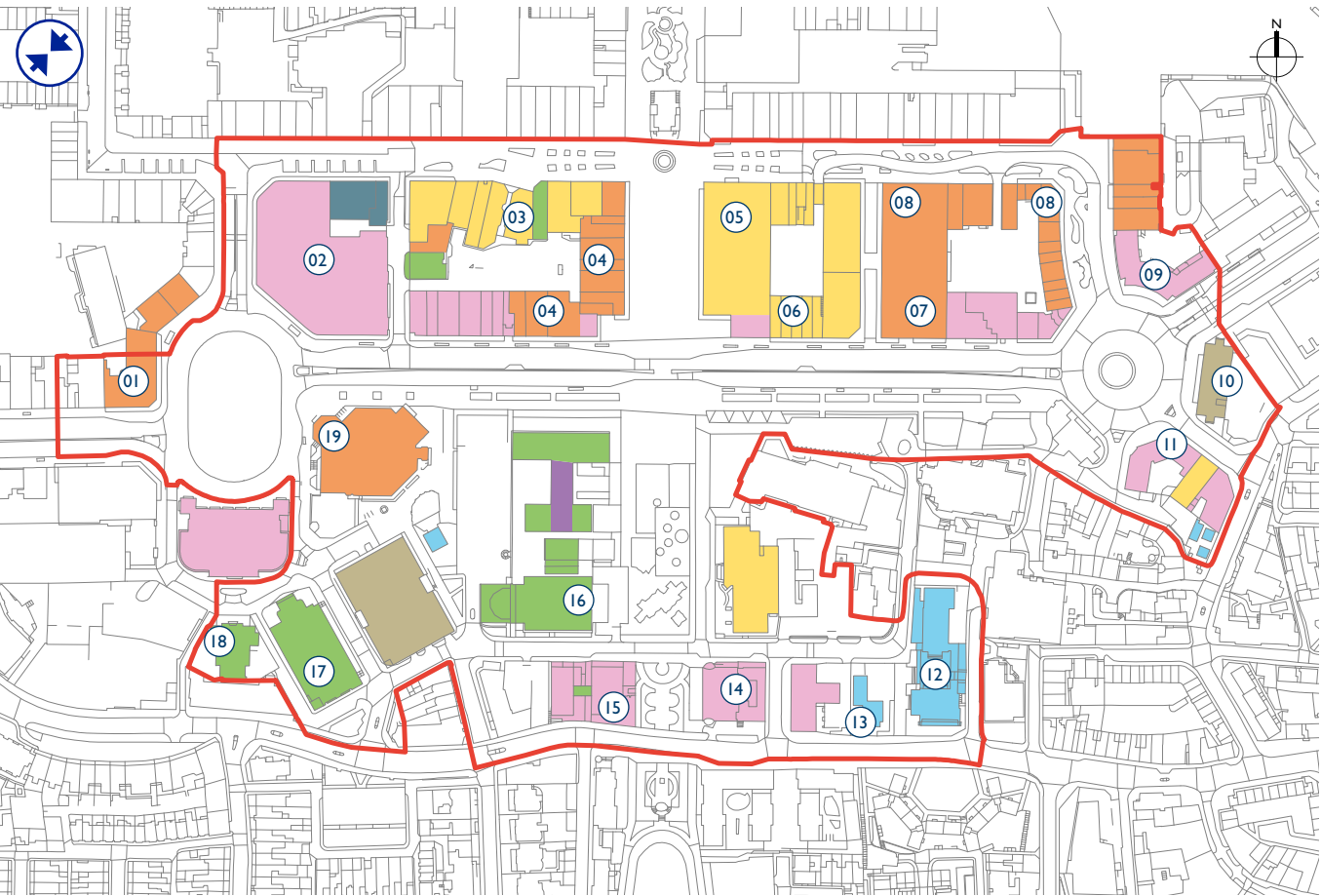


— Conservation Area Boundary

*This plan is not to scale*

Plan 3: The topography of Plymouth City Centre Conservation Area and its setting





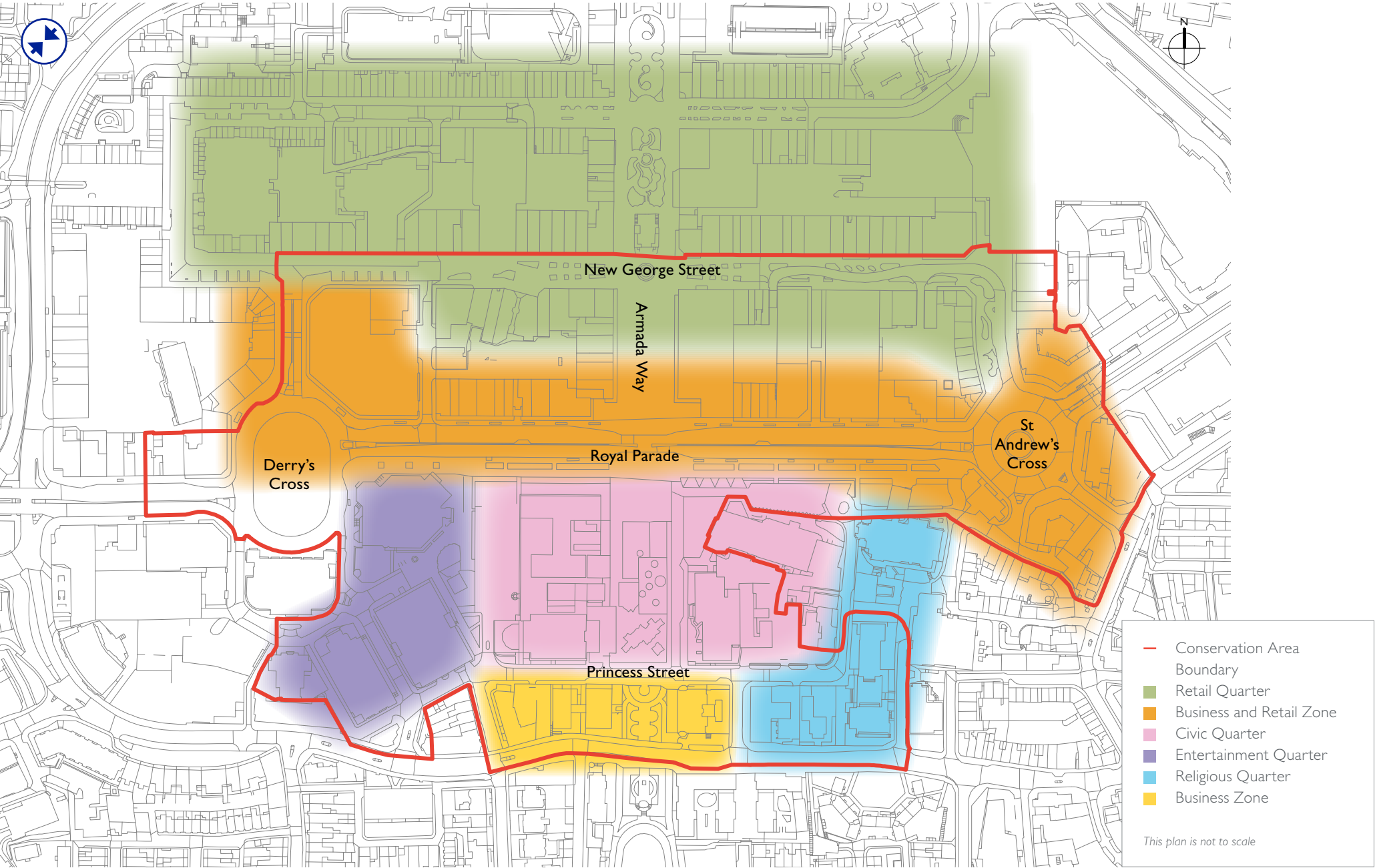
Plan 4: Building heights by storey within the Conservation Area



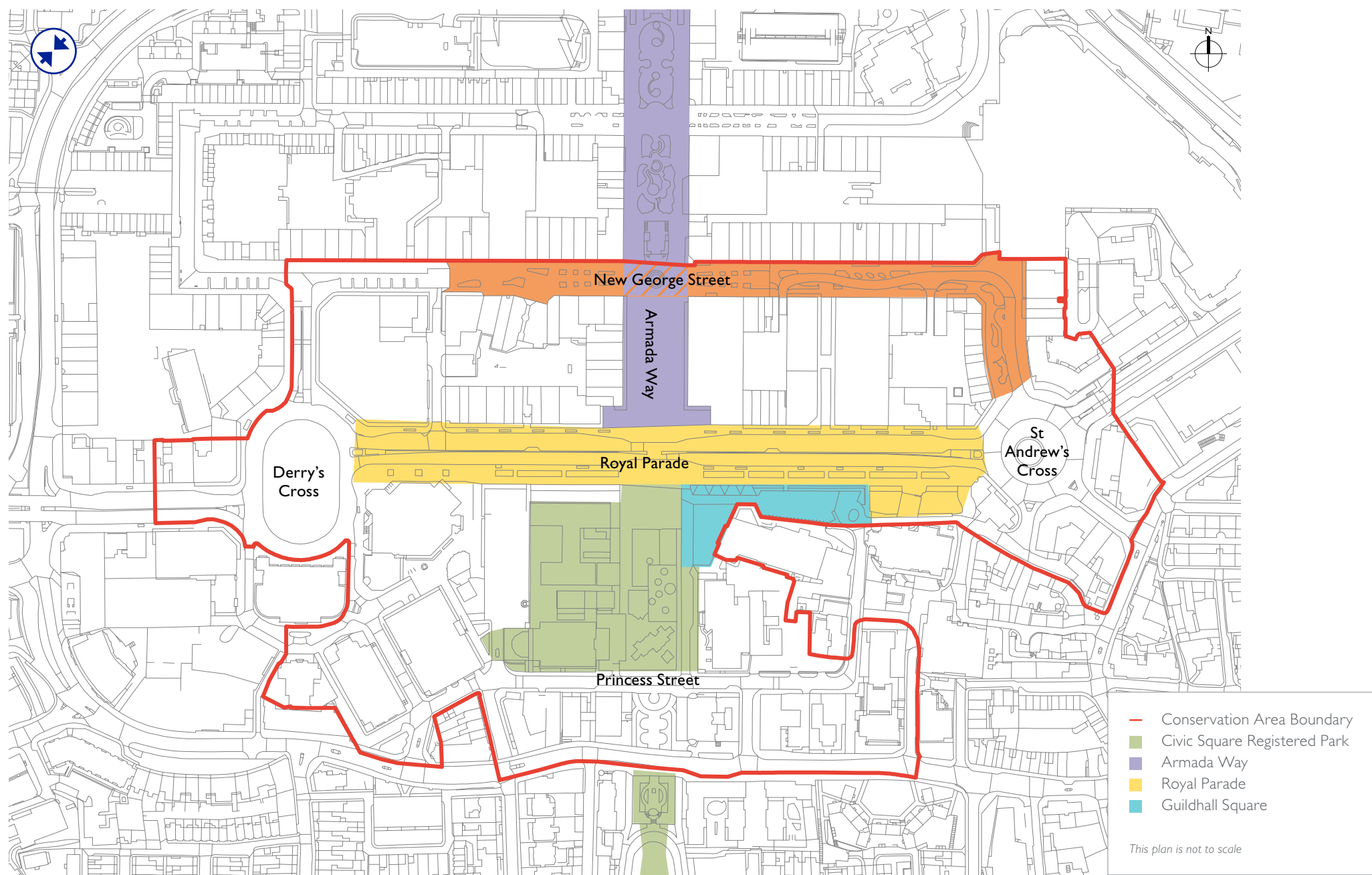
Many buildings across the city centre are of mixed heights within one building footprint. Some buildings also have tower elements or spires which extend over the main roof height.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 01 British Gas House: four-storeys plus tower.  | 12 Baptist Church: double height church building plus spire; single height ancillary buildings.  |
| 02 Cooperative Building: three main storeys plus two terrace storeys.   | 13 Unitarian Church: double height church building plus spire; single height ancillary buildings.  |
| 03 Western Morning News: three-storeys plus attic storey.   | 14 Former Barclays Bank: three-storeys as originally built; double height glass terrace storeys subsequently added.                                    |
| 04 Pearl Assurance House: four storeys plus terrace in places and corner tower (up to seven-storeys)                                | 15 Princess Court: five-storeys to Princess Street, four to Notte Street.  |
| 05 Dingles/House of Fraser: three main storeys plus two (rear) or three (front) terraces. Corner tower (up to five to six storeys). | 16 Council House: Double height chamber with ground floor storey. Lower side storey and bridge block to Civic Centre.                                  |
| 06 No.30-36 Royal Parade: three-storeys plus two terraces.  | 17 Former Reel Cinema: entrance lobby storey; full height cinema storey;   |
| 07 Debenhams: three main storeys and integral terrace storey above cornice.   | 18 Athenaeum: ground floor lobby; second floor projecting room; full height theatre.   |
| 08 South side of New George Street (east): All three-storeys plus semi-open terrace storey  | 19 Theatre Royal: incorporating double height lobby, theatre auditorium; three office storeys above large service entrance to rear in blockwork tower. |
| 09 Post Office: four original storey plus recent terrace storey   |  |
| 10 National Provincial Bank: building includes treble-height atrium to front and copper attic storey                                |  |
| 11 Royal Building: five regular   |  |

This plan is not to scale

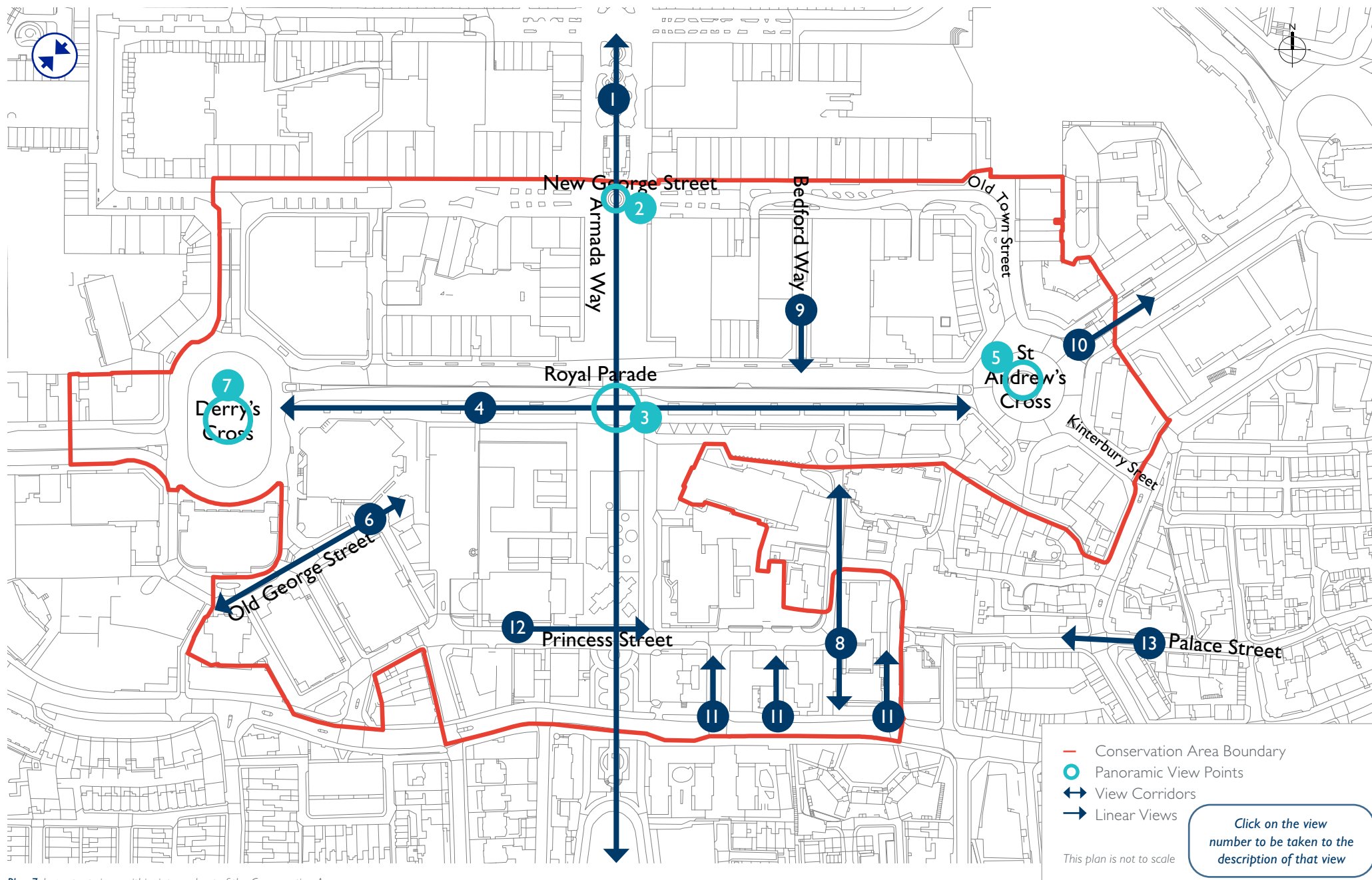


Plan 5: The different use zones established in the Post-War Plan for Plymouth..

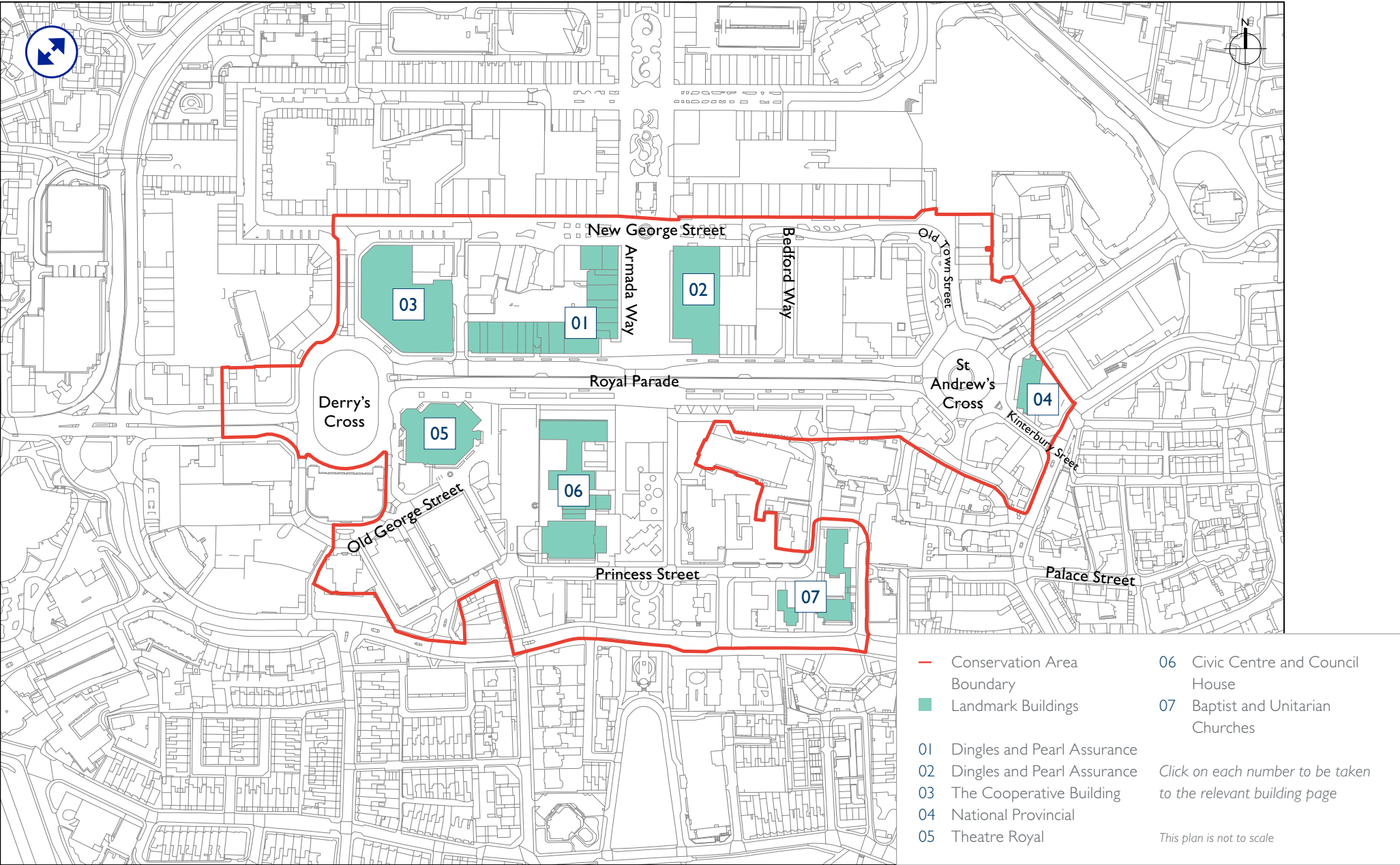


Plan 6: Important public amenity spaces and streets within the Conservation Area





Plan 7: Important views within, into and out of the Conservation Area



Plan 8: Landmark buildings in the Conservation Area



Plan 9: The significance of buildings in the Conservation Area



